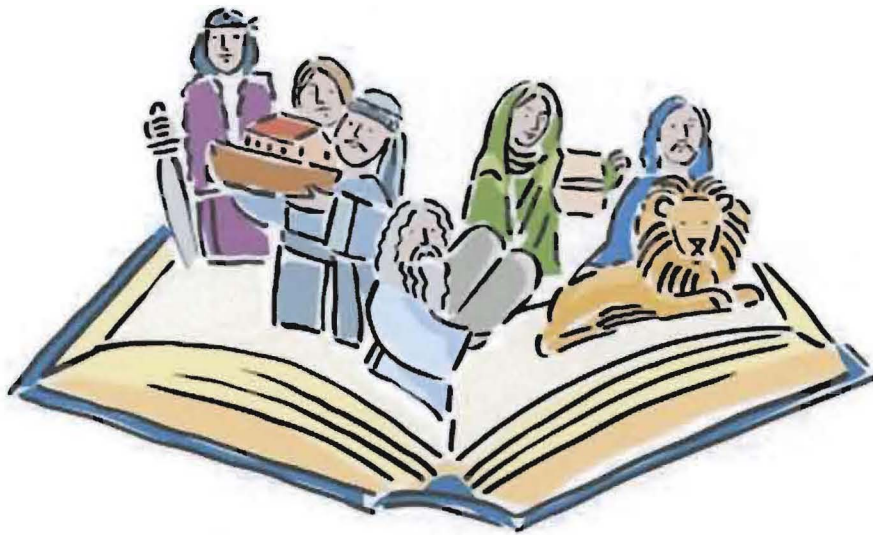


# Christian Education and Beyond: A Unit of Study with Practical Applications in the General Education Classroom



Senior Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

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## **Abstract**

This creative project is a unit of lesson plans designed for Fountain Square United Methodist, in Muncie, Indiana. I started "No Limits on Us" for middle school students. Its existence spans the elementary age children from the middle school age children in a developmentally appropriate setting. As a major of Second to teach the young adults while trying many strategies from my becoming a licensed teacher.

This project contains a research component where I analyzed middle school students who are regular attendees to this class a pretest and post-test to measure the attitudes and educational progress on effective teaching practices and incorporated different learning in my planning. I learned immensely through this project. Although this unit is based on strategies primarily used in the general education

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### **The Need for and Background of this Project**

This project is a unit that I designed for and taught at my church, Fountain Square United Methodist, for the middle school Sunday school class, “No Limits on Us.” I have attended this church for many years, working in both the nursery and elementary school classes. I have enjoyed working with children of all ages at my church, but I particularly enjoy working with young adults. I am going to be licensed in secondary education, and this age group is where my passion lies. I began teaching the “No Limits on Us” class of sixth and seventh graders in November 2008 because there was a great need for it; the elementary and middle school grades were still being taught in the same class. The elementary school children were not at the same developmental or cognitive level as the middle school children. As a result, all of the children were distracted during lessons, and activities were nearly impossible to plan due to the span in age (from four to twelve). A solid group of five middle school girls came to church every week, but I began to see a decline in their attendance because church did not seem to be relevant to them and meet their needs. My intent with this project is to target the needs of those five middle school students as well as hook other students who may attend my church on an infrequent basis.

Although I have been teaching the “No Limits on Us” class since October, the unit I created for this thesis is the first unit I have taught to that class. Previously, I was just teaching isolated lessons and also helping with the transition to our new room within the church, which needed painted and cleaned. After spending several weeks doing those activities, we celebrated the Christmas season by preparing and performing a Christmas musical that I wrote. Now that the physical needs of the students have been met by providing a safe and clean classroom, I began to meet their educational needs by giving the students a survey prior to beginning the unit. I analyzed this survey over Christmas break in order to design a unit to teach to the needs of the

students and meet the students where they are in their faith and raise them to meet both my expectations and the expectations set forth by my church.

### **The Components of this Project**

This project is comprised of goals specific to this unit, enduring understandings (or more complex concepts that will be explored through multiple units or even years), a calendar overview, individual lesson plans for each week with reflections, copies of all handouts and supplemental materials, examples of student work, and an evaluation plan so that I know all students meet the requirements of this unit. The enduring understandings are particularly significant because I am opening lifelong conversations on meaningful topics that relate to the students' experiences as Christians beyond just this unit. Each lesson is planned for approximately 75 minutes of instructional time: 45 minutes for Sunday school and 30 additional minutes during the morning worship time. The unit is planned to span fourteen weeks.

The unit I am teaching explores what it means to be a Christian. Because all of my students are female, I am exploring only female Biblical characters in this introduction unit, including: Ruth, Naomi, Sarah, Hagar, Eve, and Delilah. I want students to examine their own lives and compare their situations to those of the women we study. I designed this unit around the fruits of the spirit (Galatians 5:22) in order to judge what makes a faithful Christian. The fruits of the spirit include nine characteristics that Christians should live by: goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, joy, love, peace, patience, and kindness. By studying these, students will have a way to measure themselves as well as the Biblical women. The students will realize that everyone possesses both positive and negative characteristics, even people in the Bible.

### **Routines Related to My Classroom**

At the beginning of Sunday school, students make hot chocolate to drink while we have our lesson. This routine not only lets the students know what to expect when they come to church in the morning, but also helps wake them up, especially if they did not eat breakfast. As soon as students prepare their hot chocolate, each student grabs her individual binder from the shelf in our room and writes down prayer requests and praises for the week. I have time to take attendance or make copies while they do this. The benefit of this routine is that, if students get to church before I do, then they already know what to do. This is effective classroom management even if I am not in the room. In public schools, these activities are commonly referred to as “bell ringers,” or activities done as soon as the tardy bell rings and serve the same purpose: routine. Having these routines prevents the students from wandering around the halls and causing trouble.

In addition to keeping students busy at the beginning of class, the binders also help keep all of the students’ information together in one spot to reduce clutter. They do not take these binders home, so there is no fear of a student losing her binder or forgetting to bring it to church. In order to make anyone who is not a regular attendee with a binder feel welcome, I always have extra copies of any handout in my binder to pass out. I did not include these two activities (making hot chocolate and getting binders) on my lesson plans because they are weekly occurrences and do not require daily planning.

### **The Goals of this Project**

It intrigues me that the composition of the class is entirely one gender, but I want to use that to my advantage to tailor my instruction to be even more personal and effective. The first obvious choice I made was to use all female characters in this unit. The students should be able

to identify more with these characters or at least feel represented in the Bible by seeing these characters. Boys and girls also learn differently. According to Michael Gurian, family therapist, professor, and bestselling author of *Boys and Girls Learn Differently!*, “Girls tend to have better verbal abilities and rely heavily on verbal communication” (27). This quote encapsulates the ideology behind why I use discussion so much: girls learn better when they can talk through their thoughts. Near the beginning of every class, I write a quote on the board that connects to the theme of that day’s lesson and have students reflect on the quote in a few sentences. Then someone (either appointed or voluntary) leads a whole class discussion by using personal examples on how the quote connects to the students’ lives and how it connects to the Bible and characters we are studying. This journaling activity helps the girls improve their verbal communication abilities and caters to the way females learn.

This unit has larger goals than to simply tell students about people in the Bible and cater to the students’ learning styles. While I do believe that having a solid base of Christian knowledge is important for any Christian, knowing how to use that information on a personal level is the most important. According to the five surveys I collected before this unit, the students reported that they have neither a strong connection to the church nor a concrete Biblical foundation. For instance, only two students agreed that they would come to church if they didn’t have to attend, and only two students reported that they know the characteristics of a faithful Christian.

These students can apply the information they learn in class to their own lives through the assignments and activities we do, which are based on discussion and reflection. For example, I started this unit by having the students analyze their strengths and weaknesses on a piece of paper in the shape of a girl. Different areas on the drawing of the girl represented different areas

of their personality. For instance, the shirt contained their strengths, and the skirt contained their weaknesses. Then we traced the physical outline of each student on a large sheet of paper and hung it on the wall. The large physical outline was filled out the same as the small template. This activity served two purposes: for the students to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and for students to take ownership in the church by having a personalized room. When students feel like they belong to the church, they will hopefully feel compelled to come back without being forced. A personal connection and sense of belonging will hopefully be established between the students and the church by activities such as the life-size girl poster. It allows the students to personalize assignments and realize that each person is unique.

In addition to making the information personal, I also want the students to know that the elder church members want to support them. Fountain Square has a huge generation gap between ages 22 and 55. In a congregation of approximately 70 members, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  are over 50 years old. Almost all of the children come to church with their grandparents instead of their parents. Sometimes children don't think that older adults can relate to them and help them, but I want the students to know that the elders are a vast resource of knowledge and experience. Middle schoolers may be unwilling to approach the elder members for advice, and the elder members may be hesitant to give unsolicited advice.

In order to achieve the goal of closing the generation gap, I incorporated an activity in which the students observe an elder member of the church and watch his or her behavior during a church service. This will help students see what behaviors are expected in church and how to participate in a church service. Each student will then interview the person she observed. The interview will hopefully open the lines of communication between the middle school students and elderly population of the church by giving them a reason to interact. Both the middle school



students and the elders will realize that each can benefit from the other: the elders have knowledge that the middle schoolers do not have, and the middle schoolers have a fresh desire to learn.

### **Integrating Pedagogy into this Project**

My major is Secondary English Education, so many of the teaching techniques I am using are from that discipline. I would love for the students in the “No Limits on Us” class to become better readers and communicators as well as stronger Christians, so I am integrating strategies from all five of the language arts: reading, writing, listening, speaking, and visually representing. I also vary activities that are integral to the discipline, such as reading, that we will use every week. Sometimes I have students read by going around the table and taking turns reading aloud, sometimes I read to them, and sometimes they choose the next reader themselves after reading a passage (popcorn style of reading). We practice speaking and listening to others during discussions and reading time by presenting our ideas to the whole class and small groups. The students also listened to a sermon from the pastor over our unit’s topic. Students write during every class period so that they can document what they are learning and observing. For example, students write their prayer requests and praises down each week so that they can reflect on the week’s events and easily note the outcomes of their prayers from week to week. Students also get to write on the chalkboard during lessons and create tangible products that are published around the room as well as create drawings and other visual representations of material.

There are also different types of intelligences, or ways of learning, that students have, so I take that into account when planning lessons. Some students learn better by moving around and using their bodies, so I always give the students the option of working on the floor or on the

couches in our room as well as at the table. Sometimes a technique as simple as allowing students to move around harnesses their creative energy. According to Michael Gurian, “Movement seems to help boys not only stimulate their brains but also manage and relieve impulsive behavior” (47). Although boys especially seem to benefit from movement, I figure that girls could benefit from this technique to stimulate their brains as well. I also use group work and individual work because some students are interpersonal learners who work well with others, but others are intrapersonal learners who work well by themselves. I not only want to aid students in their strengths, but also to push them to improve their areas of limitation and step outside of their comfort zones. Using a variety of techniques ensures that I reach all types of students through activities that they both enjoy and need.

### **The Importance of this Project**

This thesis is particularly important to me because it is field experience. I am gaining more information about how middle school students think and act and how to teach them. This is a turbulent age, full of change and development. By doing this project, I am able to fill a need within my church while also fulfilling a personal passion and gaining knowledge. I am gaining more experience writing lesson plans and perfecting the designs and forms I will use as a licensed teacher in the classroom. I am taking the ideas I learned in the college classroom and applying them in a real classroom. This is also a unit I can use if I move away from my church and teach Sunday school for middle school students at a different place. This unit is not specific to a certain denomination, so it could be quickly personalized for another Christian church. Because my plans are written very clearly, another adult could also follow these plans to teach

this unit with minimal assistance. Instead of just adding to my personal growth, this project is helping a small community of people learn and grow.

## **Calendar Overview**

### **Week One (February 1, 2009)**

- Taking a Closer Look at Ourselves

### **Week Two (February 8, 2009)**

- How to use the Bible

### **Week Three (February 15, 2009)**

- Influential Christians in the Bible: A Study of Naomi

### **Week Four (February 22, 2009)**

- Focus on Ruth

### **Week Five (March 1, 2009)**

- Sarah and Hagar

### **Week Six (March 8, 2009)**

- Re-teaching Sarah and Hagar

### **Week Seven (March 15, 2009)**

- Midterm Review and Wrap-Up

### **Week Eight (March 22, 2009)**

- Understanding Eve: The Fall of Christianity

### **Week Nine (March 29, 2009)**

- Re-teaching Eve

### **Week Ten (April 5, 2009)**

- Delilah and Interviews

### **Week Eleven (April 12, 2009)**

- Easter

### **Week Twelve (April 19, 2009)**

- Listening to the Pastor's Sermon

### **Week Thirteen (April 26, 2009)**

- Wrap-up with Guidebook

### **Week Fourteen (May 3, 2009)**

- Presentation of Guidebook

### **Unit Goals**

1. Students will acquire knowledge of the characteristics of a faithful Christian, including direct instruction on the fruits of the spirit.
2. Students will connect to and develop a relationship with elder church members in order to help bridge the generation gap at Fountain Square United Methodist Church.
3. Students will begin to establish a lifelong passion for attending church and the feeling that they belong.
4. Students will recognize and implement discussion techniques.
5. Students will strengthen their content knowledge of Biblical women.
6. Students will utilize the Bible's resources and find how to locate passages.

### **Enduring Understandings**

1. The Bible and church is applicable to my life because I can make personal connections with other church members and Biblical stories.
2. The Bible can help me endure tough situations and decisions that I encounter.
3. All people contain both positive and negative characteristics; people are not simply good or evil.

## **Background and Analysis of Students**

### **Student One**

This student is a twelve-year-old seventh grade girl at a local middle school. She has a five-year-old sister who also attends Fountain Square United Methodist Church. Her parents are divorced and she has both a stepmother and a stepfather, but lives with her mother and stepfather. Her parents do not attend church; she comes to church with her grandma. She is somewhat of a social outcast at school and does not belong in the same group as the popular kids. She belongs to the choir and swim team at her school as extra curricular activities. She is at or below grade level in reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. She has a friendly disposition, but can also be very immature, especially when dealing with her sister. She picks fights with her sister and pouts when she does not get her way. She is outspoken and likes to participate in class by volunteering answers and reading aloud. She is willing to try new things and mostly does not have behavioral problems during class.

### **Student Two**

As a thirteen-year-old eighth grade girl at a local junior-senior high school, she is the oldest student in her class. She is the only student who attends a different middle school than the other students. Her parents are divorced; she lives with her mother, but she spends every other weekend with her dad. She has both a stepmother and stepfather and comes to church with her mother. She is somewhat popular at school, but she doesn't concern herself with fitting in with the mainstream crowd. She participates in band as an extra curricular activity. She is at or above grade in reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. She is very friendly, but can also be very shy and embarrasses easily. She is a very fluent reader, but will not volunteer to read in class.

When asked, she will participate without complaint. She does not communicate with the other students very much unless she is responding to a question. She does not cause behavioral problems during class and seems to have a low level of self-confidence.

### **Student Three**

This student is a twelve-year-old seventh grade girl at a local middle school. She also has a ten-year-old sister who also attends Fountain Square United Methodist Church. Her parents are divorced, and her mom is recently remarried; she visits her father and stepmother infrequently. Her mom rarely comes to church, so she comes to church with her grandparents. She has a very outgoing personality and is considered popular at her school. She is a cheerleader. She is at or below grade level in reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. She usually does not mind volunteering in class to read or give an answer. She is usually excited about the curriculum and very willing to participate. However, the quality of her answers is usually not good. She likes to talk a lot, which can be distracting to other students, especially when she gets off topic. She does not cause behavioral problems, except when she gets off task. She is best described as a social butterfly.

### **Student Four**

This student is a twelve-year-old seventh grade student at a local middle school. She is sisters with Student Five and very good friends with Student Four. Her parents are divorced, and she lives with her mom and stepdad. Her grandma brings her to church since neither of her parents attends church. She has very different elements to her personality. Sometimes she is bubbly and outgoing, and other times she is very resistant to authority. She does not cause

behavioral problems unless she is mad at her sister, in which case she is verbally abusive and argumentative. She is a cheerleader at school and would be considered very popular. She is at grade level for reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. She confuses easily and likes directions explained several times. She likes to participate but does not always seem confident in her answers.

### **Student Five**

This student is an eleven-year-old sixth grade girl at a local middle school. She is the sister of Student Four and has the same parental information. She is very shy and does not usually engage in banter with other students in the class. She does not volunteer to read during class and does not want to give answers when called on. She does not have confidence in her answers, even though she is usually right. She is at or above grade level in reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. She does not normally retort when her sister is upset with her. She is a cheerleader and would be considered popular.



## **Taking a Closer Look at Ourselves**

### **Lesson Plan February 1, 2009**

**Focus:** This lesson will introduce the unit on fruits of the spirit by getting the students to analyze themselves by making a drawing of a person that contains their strengths and weaknesses. The drawings will be presented to other members of the class so we can find commonalities among everyone in the class according to their strengths and weaknesses. The students will also write down questions about the Bible that we can explore throughout the unit.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Students will identify personal strengths and weaknesses using abstract nouns, verbs, and/or adjectives.
2. Students will draw comparisons between their strengths and weaknesses using listening skills.
3. Students will make generalizations about middle school students based on common strengths and weaknesses.

#### **Materials:**

- Copy of Girl Template for each student
- Writing utensils/markers

#### **Strategies:**

- Whole class discussion
- Presenting to a group
- Listening to a presenter
- Making generalizations
- Drawing comparisons
- Visual Representation (Idea Girls)

#### **Procedures:**

1. Tell students that today we will be starting a new topic about what it means to be a faithful Christian, but before we can do that, we need to see what good qualities we have and which qualities need improvement.
2. Pass out the Girl Template to each student.
3. Explain the assignment: decorate the head with a face to look like you. On the arms, put things that you like or are good at (strengths); on the skirt, put things you are not good at or do not like (weaknesses); and on the legs put any questions you have about the Bible or church.
4. Encourage the students to use abstract thinking. For example, have them push beyond concrete ideas (like being a gossip) to more abstract concepts (like not being respectful to others).
5. Give the students plenty of time to work by themselves to fill in all of the areas.
6. Ask for a volunteer to present her drawing to the whole class. Repeat until everyone has had a chance to present. Ask students to look for similarities between their drawing and those of others while people present.

7. Discuss with the class what some of the commonalities were among everyone. Point out that these are probably common to most middle schoolers, not just the people in this class.
8. Tell the students that we will learn how to work on our weaknesses during this unit by examining what the characteristics are of a faithful Christian.

**Assessment:**

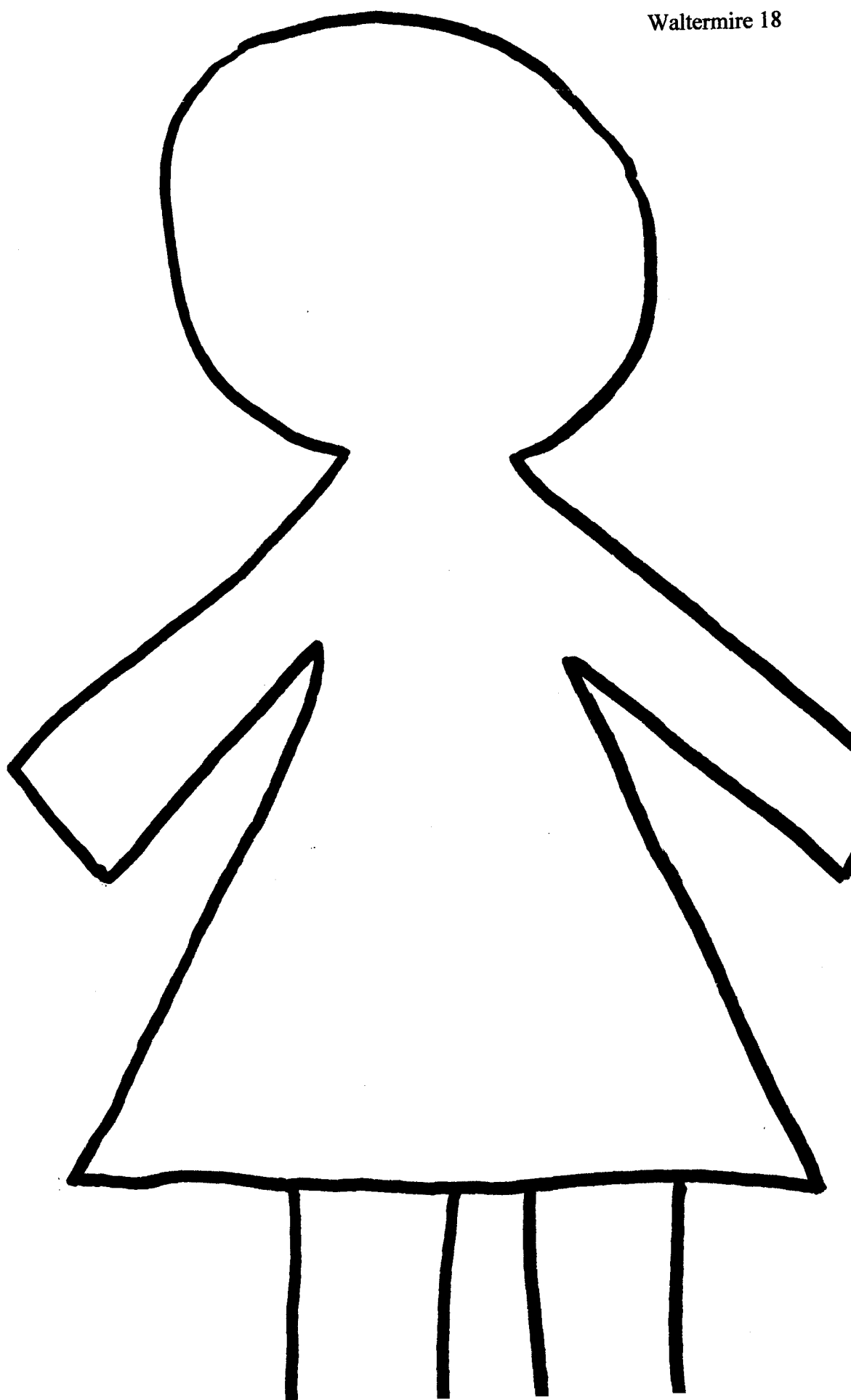
1. The teacher will observe whether or not students use abstract language. If students seem to not be using abstract language, the teacher will give an example of abstract language and encourage students to use it.
2. The teacher will ask students to look for similarities while they present. The teacher will monitor students' progress by asking questions between the presentations.
3. The teacher will lead a discussion that leads the students to make conclusions about what they all have in common.

**Reflection:**

This activity was successful because I don't think the class viewed it as something that they would usually do in church. I also didn't heavily emphasize Christian themes or Biblical references this week as a means of easing into this unit without scaring the students into not wanting to come back. The presentations of their drawings went well, but most people were really shy about it. I expected this because most of the time students are not asked to do things like this in church. It was also a personal topic, so until they started seeing trends among all of them (like gossiping), they seemed to think that they were all unique with their struggles.

I was surprised to find out some of the questions they had about the Bible and life in general. Some of the questions were really deep; they were questions that even adults struggle with, like "Will God be with me forever?" and "If I mess up, will He forgive me?" I wasn't anticipating getting some of their questions, like "Are dinosaurs in the Bible?" and "Why did God make people all different sizes?" I think I should have narrowed the topic some and asked what questions they have about faithfulness and what makes a person a good Christian. The prompt was too broad, and as a result, I am not going to be able to cover all of the questions.

I chose not to model an example of the template with my strengths and weaknesses because I didn't want them to just copy what I had; I was looking for individualized thoughts and reflections. At first they kind of didn't seem to understand what I was asking them to do, so I ended up leading them with questions to determine what some of their strengths were. Once they got something down on paper, they didn't need much assistance at all. If I taught this lesson again, I don't think I would change the part about not modeling the activity.



## Learning to Use the Bible

### Lesson Plan February 8, 2009

**Focus:** This lesson will teach students to use the Bible to find information efficiently. The Bible is set up differently than any other book, so the students need to know how to find a story or passage without being overwhelmed. If students feel comfortable using the Bible, then they will be more likely to read their Bibles at home. The students will also publish the ideas from last week on life-size girl template posters.

#### Objectives:

4. Students will publish a life-size version of themselves.
5. Students will reevaluate personal strengths and weaknesses based on a previous discussion.
6. Students will deconstruct elements of a text in order to recognize its structure.

#### Materials:

- Large paper
- Markers/writing utensils
- Various books: travel guide, textbook, novel, and anthology
- Bibles for each student
- Tape
- Scissors
- Chalkboard/chalk

#### Strategies:

- Using a index
- Publishing
- Whole group discussion

#### Procedures:

9. Tell the students that we are going to make life-size versions of the girl template that we completed last week.
10. Lay the large paper on top of a table and trace the outline of each girl on the paper.
11. Have the students cut out their outlines and add the information from last week to their life-size versions.
12. Make sure to tell the students that they can amend or change anything from their template last week by adding to the life-size version.
13. Hang the completed life-size versions on the wall.
14. Make the connection between the life-size posters and using the Bible: tell the students that we are going to make it very easy to discover what a faithful Christian is by always having the posters to refer to when we need to see our strengths and weaknesses. We are also going to learn how to navigate through the Bible to find our stories easily.

15. Pass out a book to each student. (If there are more students than books, allow them to work in pairs.)
16. Have the students explore the books for several minutes and report back to the class on how to use the book to find information and how the book is organized.
17. After each student/pair reports back to the group, tell the students that each one of these books is unique. The Bible is also unique and has its own set up.
18. Pass out Bibles to each student. Have them repeat the activity using the Bible.
19. Discuss how the Bible is set up and how to look for a book in the index. Show students how to read a passage by book, chapter, and verse.
20. Write a few example verses on the board and have students break them down by book, chapter, and verse and find it in their Bibles. (Verses: John 3:16, Genesis 1:1, Psalms 39:7, and Galatians 5:22)

### **Assessment:**

1. The teacher will ensure that all students publish their life-size posters by helping them hang up the posters with tape on the wall.
2. The teacher will help students recall information from the previous week's discussion about what middle schoolers have in common. Students may want to add to their poster based on this discussion.
3. The teacher will monitor discussion and student work time to make sure students understand the parts of a text and how to use a text. Teacher will review and add information as necessary to aid in students' comprehension.

### **Reflection:**

This lesson was not as well received as I had hoped for. The students seemed very shy about making their life-size posters, despite the fact that they all know each other very well. There was an air of awkwardness while they were being traced, even though we are all girls. After they were done being traced, they enjoyed the activity. I felt a sense of pride and accomplishment when we hung up their posters; the classroom was even more personal once the posters were up.

The students seemed confused at first by the book activity where they explored the different parts of the book. I don't think they had ever seen the types of books I brought (particularly the anthology and the travel guide). If I do this lesson again, I am going to use different types of books (maybe a contemporary young adult novel, like *Twilight*, or a children's book.) I should have also explained the directions more clearly. Knowing how to navigate in the Bible is an important skill for Christians to have, so I will definitely use some version of this lesson in the future.

## **Influential Christians in the Bible: A Study of Naomi**

### **Lesson Plan February 15, 2009**

#### **Focus:**

This lesson is designed to introduce the class to the characteristics of the fruits of the spirit (Galatians 5:22) through influential women of the Bible, starting with Ruth and Naomi. This lesson is inspired by the *True Images Bible* for teen girls "At a Glance" page, which talks about influential women. Frontloading is essential to this lesson in order to engage students and connect the Biblical information to their lives.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Students will analyze characteristics of women to decide what makes an influential woman.
2. Students will increase their vocabulary skills by listing synonyms for a given word in order to help define it.
3. Students will visually represent a given word or concept through a picture.

#### **Materials:**

- Chalk/chalkboard
- Paper/pencils
- Bibles
- Construction paper (large sheets)
- Markers

#### **Strategies:**

- Popcorn reading/reading aloud
- Vocabulary squares
- Small group collaboration
- Visual representation

#### **Procedures:**

1. Have students find Ruth in their Bibles using the index. (Page 313)
2. Ask one student to read the "At a Glance" page paragraphs 1-2 or students can alternate reading paragraphs.
3. Discuss how we will be starting to talk about Ruth and Naomi and the fruits of the spirit. We will compare Ruth and Naomi to contemporary women.
4. Break students into two groups and have them list up to 20 influential women.
5. Make a list of twenty influential women of today and write them on the board using student suggestions.
6. Rank them as a class and choose a Woman of the Year.
7. Tell the students that we will be comparing their chosen Woman of the Year to Naomi.
8. Turn to Galatians 5:22 (page 1540) to review the nine characteristics. (Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control)
9. Ask for a volunteer to read the third paragraph on page 313.

10. Read Ruth 1:1-22. Stop as necessary for summaries.
11. List the fruits of the spirit on the board and judge Naomi according to whether she possesses each characteristic by giving her a + or -. Have students defend their answers with examples from the text.
12. Encourage friendly debate and differing opinions.
13. Divide students into two groups, and have each group pick a characteristic that Naomi exhibits they would like to make into a vocabulary square.
14. Explain how to make a vocabulary square. (Square 1: write the word, Square 2: draw a picture that helps you remember the word, Square 3: write two synonyms, Square 4: write the scripture that tells about the word.)

#### **Assessment:**

1. Teacher will make sure students are working in groups and will write their final list on the board, challenging students to defend any women who is not a good role model.
2. Teacher will encourage students to think of two synonyms for the target word.
3. Teacher will observe students while drawing on the vocabulary squares.

#### **Reflection:**

This lesson was very successful because it reached students from all ability and comfort levels in the Christian faith. There were eight students today, and three were students I have never seen before. By connecting the lesson to their lives through frontloading the list of influential women, I was able to engage everyone. I reviewed how to find books of the Bible in the index and how to find scriptures according to chapter and verse. I used a lot of group work for this lesson too because there were so many girls today. The group work got somewhat competitive as each group tried keeping their lists of woman and vocabulary squares secret. I had to stress that we were working collaboratively and sharing ideas, not racing or competing.

Overall, I'm really proud of this lesson because I had to do a lot of thinking on my feet. For example, I planned to read all three paragraphs on page 313 before making the list of women, but I realized that it would make more sense to save the third paragraph until right before reading Ruth. I also told them to make a list of 20 influential women, and they struggled to think of that many, so I cut it down to a maximum of 15. If I did this lesson again, I would definitely restructure how they can up with their lists of influential women. It might have gone smoother if we did one class list instead of group lists.

## **Focus on Ruth**

### **Lesson Plan February 22, 2009**

#### **Focus:**

This lesson will review what was learned last week about Naomi and Ruth and explore Ruth's character more in depth. The review session will help the students remember what happened last week and also help catch those up who were not in attendance last week. We are making vocabulary squares again so students will become familiar with the technique.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Students will recall facts about characterization from a previous lesson.
2. Students will increase their vocabulary skills by listing synonyms for a given word in order to help define it.
3. Students will visually represent a given word or concept through a picture.
4. Students will be able to find passages in their Bibles without assistance.

#### **Materials:**

- Chalkboard/chalk
- Construction paper (large sheets)
- Markers
- Bibles
- Copy of review questions

#### **Strategies:**

- Small group collaboration
- Vocabulary Squares
- Review/board races
- Popcorn reading
- Small group presentation
- Summarizing

#### **Procedures:**

1. Tell students that today we will review the story of Naomi before we study Ruth more in depth.
2. Split the class into two teams, making sure that the people who were not present last week are on separate teams.
3. Lay out the rules for board races: students are able to collaborate with others on their team to come up with the answer. Each team gets 10 seconds to race up to the board and write the answer. If the team answers correctly, then they get a point. If they answer incorrectly, the other team gets 10 seconds to fix their answer. Spelling counts as a point if the other team can spell the word correctly. Teams alternate.
4. Review answers that the teams didn't get correct as the game proceeds.
5. Have students get into their vocabulary squares group from last week, dividing any students who were not there last week evenly into groups.



6. Have the presenting group stand in front of the other group, who is the audience and sits on the couches.
7. Give students about 5 minutes to present their vocabulary squares on Naomi. The other group must ask at least one question to the presenters.
8. Switch and allow the other group to present and answer questions.
9. Hang up vocabulary squares on the wall.
10. Turn in Bibles to Ruth 2. (page 315)
11. Choose a student to read the first paragraph, then popcorn style read Ruth 2.
12. Have students summarize the story.
13. List the fruits of the spirit on the board and judge Ruth according to whether she possesses each characteristic.
14. Divide students into two groups, and have each group pick a characteristic that they would like to make into a vocabulary square.
15. Review how to complete vocabulary squares.
16. Pass out supplies and allow students time to work.
17. Have students share their vocabulary squares and hang up on the wall.

**Assessment:**

1. Teacher will make sure that a different student writes on the board for each question. Teacher will also allow the other group to correct wrong answers for even more review.
2. Teacher will encourage students to think of two synonyms for the target word and ask students to explain their choices during the presentation.
3. Teacher will observe students drawing on the vocabulary square and ask students to explain their drawing during the presentation.

**Reflection:**

The review session at the beginning of class was vital for this lesson because they did remember a lot of the content from last week, but many details they also forgot. Since we read a continuation of last week's story, reviewing the facts was really important so that no one was confused as to where in the story we were. The review was very popular too. Everyone participated and was enthusiastic. I was worried that there would be a clear loser and winner and how they might react to that, but the game actually ended in a tie!

The other part of the lesson that was very successful was when each group presented their vocabulary squares. I made each member of the audience ask a question to the presenters, and they all really benefited from having to explain their projects. I was quite impressed with the level of complex thought they put into the abstract concepts on the vocabulary squares, like the pictures.

### **Review Questions**

1. What is the name of the book that the story appears in? Ruth
2. Which testament is Ruth found in? Old
3. What chapter of Ruth did we read last week? One
4. What is the name of the mother in law? Naomi
5. What are the names of the two daughters-in-law? Ruth and Orpah
6. Who dies in this story? The husbands/Naomi's sons
7. What did Naomi tell Ruth and Orpah to do? Go back to their families
8. Why did Ruth and Naomi have to leave their city? famine
9. What city did they go to? Bethlehem
10. What did Naomi do when asked, "Can this be Naomi?" changed her name to Mara (bitter)
11. List the fruits of the spirit. Love, peace, gentleness, self-control, kindness, joy, patience, faithfulness, goodness

## **Sarah and Hagar**

### **Lesson Plan March 1, 2009**

#### **Focus:**

This lesson will introduce two more women of the Bible who deserve to be studied: one well-known character (Sarah) and one lesser-studied character (Hagar). These women will be compared to Ruth and Naomi for a review of what was taught last week. Students will be comparing the similarities and differences between each set of women.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Students will compare and contrast two characters by listing their individual attributes on a Venn diagram.
2. Students will use textual evidence to analyze characters.

#### **Materials:**

- Bibles
- Copies of Venn diagram
- Pen/pencils
- Chalkboard/chalk

#### **Strategies:**

- Venn diagramming
- Popcorn reading
- Whole class discussion
- Summarizing
- Modeling
- Small group presentation

#### **Procedures:**

1. Break students back up into their vocabulary squares group from last week.
2. Prepare students for presentations by having one group sit on the couch and the other group present.
3. Have each member of the audience ask one question each to the presentation group.
4. Switch roles after one group presents.
5. Lead into a further review of Ruth and Naomi after presentations by having students summarize what they read last week.
6. Draw a Venn diagram on the chalkboard; label one bubble "Ruth" and one bubble "Naomi."
7. Tell students to think back to their vocabulary squares and the preceding discussion to think about characteristics of each woman.
8. Write the characteristics under the appropriate bubble as students give them.
9. Lead into the story of Sarah and Hagar by telling the students that we will now read a story about two women who share a history like Ruth and Naomi but have a very different relationship.

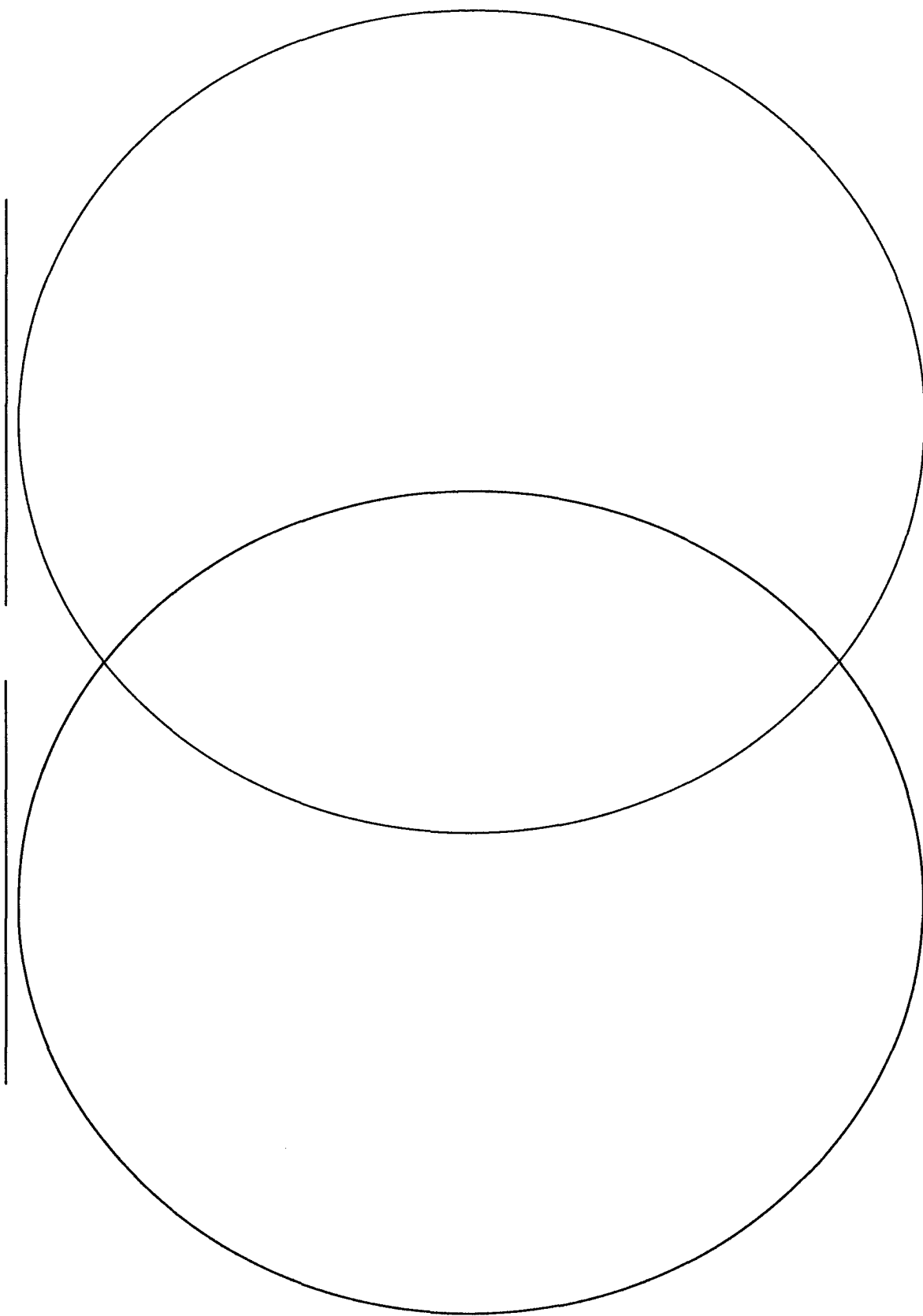
10. Turn in the Bible to Genesis 16 and ask for a volunteer to begin reading.
11. Stop to summarize the text as necessary and continue reading to Genesis 17 in a popcorn fashion.
12. Draw a Venn diagram on the board and label one bubble “Hagar” and one bubble “Sarai.”
13. Pass out a copy of the Venn diagram to each student.
14. Give the students a few minutes to start filling out the diagram on their own.
15. Come back together as a class; fill out the diagram on the board from student suggestions.
16. Continue reading Genesis 17:1-8, 15-22 popcorn style.
17. Ask the students if their ideas about Hagar or Sarah have changed.
18. Amend the diagram as necessary according to student suggestions. (Note: make sure to change Sarai’s name to “Sarah” and discuss the importance of name changes by connecting it to Naomi changing her name to “Mara,” meaning bitter.)
19. Discuss the similarities and differences between all four women studied so far.

#### **Assessment:**

1. Teacher will model the Venn diagramming process on the board using Ruth and Naomi. The teacher will also make sure students fill out their individual diagrams correctly and answer any questions.
2. Teacher will ask students to support their answers with instances from the text and specific examples.

#### **Reflection:**

This lesson was successful, but there were only two students present today. Most of them had told me in advance that they would not be there, and they had legitimate reasons for missing. Everything went a lot faster with only two students because there wasn’t as much discussion, but it was not awkward at all like I thought it might be. I figured there would be a lot of silence. They wanted to make vocabulary squares, but they didn’t get very far, so next week if there are more students, I will just have the two who already know the lesson work on their squares while I catch the others up. I really need to work on students talking more to one another and not just to me. I’m not really sure how to do this. Maybe they could lead their own discussion days?



## Re-teaching Sarah and Hagar

### Lesson Plan March 8, 2009

#### Focus:

Since there were only two students present last time, I must re-teach the Sarah and Hagar story. The focus is still on comparing Ruth and Naomi to Sarah and Hagar. I also want to create more discussion among students, not just between student and teacher.

#### Objectives:

3. Students will compare and contrast two characters by listing their individual attributes on a Venn diagram.
4. Students will use textual evidence to analyze characters.

#### Materials:

- Bibles
- Copies of Venn diagram
- Pen/pencils
- Chalkboard/chalk

#### Strategies:

- Venn diagramming
- Popcorn reading
- Whole class discussion
- Summarizing
- Small group presentation

#### Procedures:

1. Break students back up into their vocabulary squares group from last week.
2. Prepare students for presentations by having one group sit on the couch and the other group present.
3. Have each member of the audience group ask one question each to the presentation group.
4. Switch roles after one group presents.
5. Have students summarize what they read last week about Ruth and Naomi.
6. Lead into the story of Sarah and Hagar by telling the students that we will now read a story about two women who share a history like Ruth and Naomi but have a very different relationship.
7. Turn in the Bible to Genesis 16 and ask for a volunteer to begin reading.
8. Stop to summarize the text as necessary and continue reading Genesis 17:1-8, 15-22 in a popcorn fashion.
9. Have students generate a list of the nine fruits of the spirit on the board and go through the traits with Sarah and Hagar separately.
10. Divide the class into pairs and give each pair a Venn diagram.

11. Come back together as a class after students have had time to fill in the diagram in pairs; have students fill out the diagram on the board from student suggestions by sending up one pair at a time to write a characteristic until no more are left.
12. Ask the students if their ideas about Hagar or Sarah have changed.
13. Amend the diagram as necessary according to student suggestions. (Note: make sure to change Sarai's name to "Sarah" and discuss the importance of name changes by connecting it to Naomi changing her name to "Mara," meaning bitter.)
14. Discuss the similarities and differences between all four women studied so far.

#### **Assessment:**

1. The teacher will make sure students fill out their diagrams in pairs correctly and answer any questions. The teacher can observe what the students found by looking at the answers they write on the board.
2. Teacher will ask students to support their answers with instances from the text and specific examples.

#### **Reflection:**

Today I had the opposite problem of last week—there were 10 girls present today, so I had to speed up this lesson and cut out some things. I did not have time to model the Venn diagram for Ruth and Naomi on the board, but everyone felt comfortable using Venn diagrams already. I also cut out some of the Biblical text (not due to time—due to content). Part of the chapter talked about circumcision, which is not relevant to what we are talking about and not really a topic I wanted to go into.

This is the first time I've really ever had to use discipline. Some groups were talking about irrelevant things while another group was writing in the board, so I asked the group if they had a question. They got the point and stopped talking. Another girl wanted to draw a picture while we were doing the diagrams, so I had to tell her that we were not doing that right now. This is church, not school, so I don't want to go to extremes on discipline, but I don't think I will have to. It was nothing major, but I felt like this represented more of a real public middle school during group work time and the tendency to be off-task. Sometimes very simple measures will correct the problem, even getting close to the offending student. The important thing is to respect the students and not embarrass them, which I did not.

The copier was also broken today, so I only had enough copies leftover from last week for half the class. I divided the students into pairs for the Venn diagramming, and it actually worked out better than doing it individually. This lesson proves that no one can really teach the same lesson twice because the circumstances will always be different.

## Midterm Review and Wrap-up

### Lesson Plan March 15, 2009

#### Focus:

This lesson will wrap up the women we have been studying so far in a highly engaging review game of *Jeopardy*. The students will also work on their discussion skills and become more comfortable with talking to each other. Today is a short day due to Communion, so students will only be in class for half the time.

#### Objectives:

1. Students will reflect on a quote using personal examples.
2. Students will draw similarities between previously learned texts and a quote.
3. Students will recall information from previous lessons about plot, characters, and how to use the Bible.

#### Materials:

- Bibles
- *Inspiration for Girls* book
- Chalkboard/chalk
- Paper
- Pens/pencils
- 2 bells
- Copy of *Jeopardy* review game questions

#### Strategies:

- Small group collaboration
- Review
- Whole class discussion
- Reflection

#### Procedures:

1. Write the quote of the week on the board.
2. Have students copy the quote and write a two-sentence reflection about it.
3. Tell students that we want to foster discussion among all people, not just teacher-student interactions. Model discussion techniques and asking open-ended questions. Focus on how the quote connects to the characters.
4. Divide the class into two teams.
5. Give the students several minutes to review the stories of Ruth, Naomi, Sarah, and Hagar in their Bibles.
6. Write the layout of the *Jeopardy* review game on the board while students are reviewing in groups.
7. Answer any questions students have about the content of the stories or characters.
8. Put a bell on each end of a long table and have the groups stand around their bell.
9. Explain the rules of the game: whichever team rings the bell first gets to answer the questions. Wrong answers will be deducted from their score for the amount of



the question. The other team may guess if the first team answers incorrectly, but they must ring their bell. If they answer incorrectly, they will also have the amount deducted from their score. The team gets to pick another question if they get the answer right. The teams will write the answer to the “Final Jeopardy” question on a piece of paper.

10. Start the game by asking the first team to pick a question. Keep score as students answer questions.
11. Tell the students that we have been studying sets of Christian women who compliment each other and become better Christians through their interactions with each other. Next week we will start studying deviant Christian women.

### **Assessment:**

- 1-2. Teacher will make sure students are writing their reflections in their binders. Teacher will also monitor the conversation to make sure students are drawing connections between the text and their lives.
3. Teacher will answer any questions that the students have and correct wrong answers.

### **Reflection:**

This lesson did not go as planned for several reasons. I didn’t think we’d have enough time to play the review game, so I decided to move the discussion to the end. A man in the church volunteered to make wooden nameplates to hang up in our room with all of the girls’ names on them. He brought them in and wanted the girls to file away the rough edges, so we did that for the last part of class instead of the discussion. This is an example of how teachers have to be flexible. Some things happen that just can’t be avoided.

The discussion was awkward today. Students really didn’t understand what I was talking about when I said “discussion.” The students were very shy and didn’t want to talk to one another about the quote. I definitely need a handout to explain the activity. I will need to model more next week also.

The *Jeopardy* game was really fun because we had bells to ring for buzzers. However, one girl does not like to lose, so she had a little problem with being on the losing team. She did get over it pretty quickly though. I need to think really hard before I make things about competition because that’s not the spirit of the class. I also let the students make the *Jeopardy* board before class, and they really liked that.

## ***Jeopardy Review Game Questions***

### **The Bible**

- \$100: What page would you go to when you are looking for a certain book in the Bible?
- Table of contents
- \$200: What is the first book of the Bible?
- Genesis
- \$300: In which Testament do both Genesis and Ruth appear?
- Old Testament
- \$400: In the scripture John 3:16, which number is the chapter?
- 3

### **Ruth and Naomi**

- \$100: Who is the mother-in-law?
- Naomi
- \$200: Who dies in this story?
- The husbands
- \$300: What is the name of the man Ruth works for?
- Boaz
- \$400: Why must Ruth and Naomi leave their homeland?
- Famine

### **Sarah and Hagar**

- \$100: Who is the servant in this story?
- Hagar
- \$200: Whom does Sarah blame for her misery?
- Abram
- \$300: Name both people that have angels appear to them.
- Abraham and Hagar
- \$400: What is the name of Sarah and Abraham's baby?
- Isaac

### **Fruits of the Spirit**

- \$100: This fruit is best represented by a heart.
- Love
- \$200: Which book of the Bible are the fruits of the spirit found in?
- Galatians
- \$300: This fruit is best represented by a smiley face.
- Joy
- This fruit can also be called maturity.
- Self-control

### **Final Jeopardy**

- List one person who changes his/her name and why.
- Naomi (Mara)=bitter
- Abram (Abraham)=father of many
- Sarai (Sarah)=mother of many

## Understanding Eve: The Fall of Christianity

### Lesson Plan March 22, 2009

#### Focus:

This lesson will address what happens when good people make bad choices. We've been talking all along about good and bad characteristics in women. This lesson will get students thinking ahead to next week when we go in-depth about Delilah. The goal is for students to realize that there are shades of gray, not just "good" and "evil." Because this story is so famous, I am challenging each student to pick out some aspect of the story that they did not know or remember. This lesson also frontloads interviewing techniques, which will be important for next week when they interview elder church members.

#### Objectives:

1. Students will reflect on a quote using personal examples.
2. Students will draw similarities between previously learned texts and a quote.
3. Students will generate interview questions from the perspective of a character.

#### Materials:

- Bibles
- *Inspiration for Girls* book
- Chalkboard/chalk
- Paper
- Pens/pencils
- Copies of How to Talk for each student
- Copies of Faithful Christian for each student

#### Strategies:

- Whole class discussion
- Reflection
- Popcorn reading
- Frontloading interview techniques
- Oral presentation
- Partner collaboration

#### Procedures:

12. Write the quote of the week on the board.
13. Have students copy the quote and write a two-sentence reflection about it.
14. Pass out the handout and have students go around the circle reading it.
15. Tell students that we want to foster discussion among all people, not just between teacher and student. Model discussion techniques by asking open-ended questions. Focus on how the quote connects to the characters.
16. Pass out the Faithful Christian handout and go over it. Make sure students know to observe a person today.
17. Tell students that before we begin reading the story of Eve, we are going to find out what you already know.

18. Ask students to generate a list of the nine fruits of the spirit and write them on the board.
19. Rank each characteristic with a + or – depending on whether they think Eve has these characteristics.
20. Have students open up their Bibles to “Mirror Images” on page 7 and read it in a popcorn style.
21. Read Genesis 3-4 in a popcorn style. Stop students at the end of each paragraph or so and ask if they learned something new about this story that they have already studied so much.
22. Break the students into pairs and ask them to interview each other. One pretends to be the snake, God, or Adam, and the other one is Eve.
23. Have the students come up with interview questions for the other person.
24. Perform the interviews in front of the class, one group at a time.

**Assessment:**

- 1-2. Teacher will make sure students are writing their reflections in their binders. Teacher will also monitor the conversation to make sure students are drawing connections to the text and their lives.
3. Teacher will make sure students understand to take on the persona of the character and monitor pairs during work time.

**Reflection:**

This lesson did not go as planned at all because we had a guest speaker today in church, so students were only with me for half of the normal time. Also, many of the girls are on Spring Break, so there were only three there today. We painted the nameplates that the man made for us last week. We also had our reflective discussion. It went a lot better today. Everyone spoke and was on topic. I am still thinking of ways for their discussion to go into deeper and more meaningful issues. Today we connected it to Eve. Even though we didn't talk about Eve in-depth, everyone already had a basic understanding of the story because it is so famous. I will continue pushing the discussions forward. I think if students felt more comfortable with it, which they will with practice, then it will be more popular and go smoother. One student suggested to me in private to not call them discussions because it sounded intimidating, so my handout says “talking.”

## How to Talk

We all love to talk! Sometimes we talk about important things, like what's happening in our lives and the world. Sometimes we talk about unimportant things, like what's happening in the moment and what we are going to wear. It seems silly that we are learning how to talk, but there are different kinds of talking depending on what situation you are in. I want our class to be informal and for everyone to feel comfortable, just like the group of friends we are.

This activity will hopefully help us do that! We are going to start responding to a quote each week at the beginning of class by writing a few sentences about it. Each week a leader will guide us through what the quote means. This will help us learn the important kind of talk called discussion. Here's how to get started:

### Procedures for Talking

- Do not raise your hand. Pretend like you are sitting in the cafeteria talking to your friends.
- Do not look at the teacher; look at whoever is leading discussion.
- Answer questions with specific examples from your life and the Bible.
- Ask a question if you think of one, even if you are not the discussion leader.

### Helpful Hints for the Leader

- Don't be afraid to wait for an answer. Silence is okay!
- Be able to explain your question in case other people don't understand it.
- Have more questions ready than you have time to ask.
- Let other people ask questions too.
- Try to get everyone to participate by asking for her opinion specifically.

### Possible Questions to Ask

- Can I explain any unclear words in the quote?
- Is there an author to the quote? Does anyone know this person? Is that important?
- What does this quote mean?
- How does this quote connect to characters we've been studying?
- How does this quote connect to my life?
- Does anyone have a personal example or experience that connects to this quote?
- Anything else that you think of!

## What Does a Faithful Christian Look Like?

We will be exploring what a faithful Christian looks like and how we can be faithful Christians. What are your ideas of what a faithful Christian is? What qualities do faithful Christians have? List your ideas here.

The best way to learn is by watching others. Student teachers practice with real teachers before they have their own classrooms. Doctors and nurses practice before they earn their licenses. Almost every job requires special training by someone more experienced! In order to train for the most important job of all, being a Christian, we must practice! Choose one person from the church family that you believe is a very good Christian. Record your observations of that person throughout our study.

Name of Person:

Date	Behaviors I Noticed	What I Learned

Some ideas of things to record:

- What does this person do during singing times?
- Does this person arrive at church early? Does he/she stay late?
- Does this person have any special responsibilities during worship? Before worship? After worship?
- How does this person interact with others?

## Understanding Eve: The Fall of Christianity

### Lesson Plan March 29, 2009

#### Focus:

This lesson will address what happens when good people make bad choices. We've been talking all along about good and bad characteristics in women. This lesson will get students thinking ahead to next week when we go in-depth about Delilah. The goal is for students to realize that there are shades of gray, not just "good" and "evil." Because this story is so famous, I am challenging each student to pick out some aspect of the story that they did not know or remember. This lesson also frontloads interviewing techniques, which will be important for next week when they interview elder church members.

#### Objectives:

4. Students will reflect on a quote using personal examples.
5. Students will draw similarities between previously learned texts and a quote.
6. Students will generate interview questions from the perspective of a character.

#### Materials:

- Bibles
- *Inspiration for Girls* book
- Chalkboard/chalk
- Paper
- Pens/pencils
- Extra copies of How to Talk for each student
- Extra copies of Faithful Christian for each student

#### Strategies:

- Whole class discussion
- Reflection
- Popcorn reading
- Frontloading interview techniques
- Oral presentation
- Partner collaboration

#### Procedures:

25. Write the quote of the week on the board.
26. Have students copy the quote and write a two-sentence reflection about it.
27. Pass out the handout and have students go around the circle reading it.
28. Tell students that we want to foster discussion among all people, not just between teacher and student. Model discussion techniques by asking open-ended questions. Focus on how the quote connects to the characters.
29. Pass out the Faithful Christian handout and go over it. Make sure students know to observe a person today.
30. Tell students that before we begin reading the story of Eve, we are going to find out what you already know.

31. Ask students to generate a list of the nine fruits of the spirit and write them on the board.
32. Rank each characteristic with a + or – depending on whether they think Eve has these characteristics.
33. Have students open up their Bibles to “Mirror Images” on page 7 and read it in a popcorn style.
34. Read Genesis 3-4 in a popcorn style. Stop students at the end of each paragraph or so and ask if they learned something new about this story that they have already studied so much.
35. Break the students into pairs and ask them to interview each other. One pretends to be the snake, God, or Adam, and the other one is Eve.
36. Have the students come up with interview questions for the other person.
37. Perform the interviews in front of the class, one group at a time.

### **Assessment:**

- 1-2. Teacher will make sure students are writing their reflections in their binders. Teacher will also monitor the conversation to make sure students are drawing connections between the text and their lives.
3. Teacher will make sure students understand to take on the persona of the character and monitor pairs during work time.

### **Reflection:**

The discussion today was the best that it has been. Not everyone participated, but those that did participate made the discussion very lively. A student led the opening discussion, and I think that she did a very good job. I took her out in the hallway to make sure she felt comfortable with the questions she had prepared while the others wrote their reflections. Two good tactics that I will have to remind the discussion leader about are calling specifically on students if necessary and also reminding them that they have something written down to reference in case the conversation gets slow. I will try the three card discussion strategy if the conversation remains slow.

I deviated from my lesson plan at the last minute today, and it turned out very well. Instead of having each group do interviews, I gave them each a different topic to make a news show. The groups were: breaking news that summarized the story of Eve; a live interview with Eve; the weather in Eden; and a criminal profile report on the snake, who is still on the loose. This still met my objective of giving them practice interviewing for next week when they interview elder church members.



## Shades of Gray: A Study of Delilah

### Lesson Plan April 5, 2009

**Focus:** This lesson goes more in-depth with the idea that people have both good characteristics and bad characteristics by reading the story of Sampson and Delilah. It is a continuation of last week's discussion. The students will see that everyone struggles with some negative aspect of his or her personality. The students will also form relationships with members of the church by interviewing them using the techniques practiced last week.

#### Objectives:

7. Students will interview elder church members.
8. Students will compare and contrast characters from the Bible with their own characteristics.
9. Students will analyze textual support in order to evaluate a character's personal attributes.

#### Materials:

- Bibles
- *Inspiration for Girls* book
- Chalkboard/chalk
- Paper
- Pens/pencils
- Extra copies of How to Talk handout for each student
- Copies of Interview handout for each student

#### Strategies:

- Whole class discussion
- Reflection
- Popcorn reading
- Interviewing
- Comparing and contrasting

#### Procedures:

38. Write the quote of the week on the board.
39. Have students copy the quote and write a two-sentence reflection about it.
40. Pass out the Interview handout and read the questions aloud.
41. Have students fill in the blanks on the questions.
42. Have students interview the same person they observed last week between Sunday school and regular church. Write in the person's responses.
43. Have students open up their Bibles to the story of Delilah (Judges 16: 4-20).
44. Read the story in a popcorn way.
45. Ask students to generate a list of the nine fruits of the spirit and write them on the board.
46. Rank each characteristic with a + or – depending on whether they think Delilah has these characteristics.
47. Repeat the exercise for Sampson.

48. Discuss: Are people either good or bad, or do people have both characteristics?  
Look back on your life-size poster for reference.
49. Compare yourself to a character in the Bible that we have studied so far by giving yourself a + or – for each fruit of the spirit.
50. Present the comparison to the class.

**Assessment:**

1. Teacher will observe students while they interview. The class will also discuss them and post them in the room to make sure they are completed.
2. The teacher will monitor the discussion to ensure that students are drawing effective comparisons.
3. The teacher will ask the students to look back through the text to give reasons why the students believe someone does or doesn't have certain characteristics.

**Reflection:**

Today the pastor's wife gave the students kites before our second session, so I decided to take the students out to fly kites. This was really fun, even though it wasn't quite windy enough. Everyone was running around trying to get her kite to fly and having a good time. We spent some of the time that I was planning to use for the lesson flying kites, but it was worth it to have the students bond and spend time together outside. They probably actually listened better because they had some of their energy out!

They also seemed to enjoy the interview because it felt like they had some power, which they normally do not have. They were excited for their answers, which we read and then posted around the room.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Our middle school class is studying what characteristics good Christians have and how to be one. We studied the fruits of the spirit (Galatians 5:22) and have talked about them a lot! I've noticed how you worship during church, and I'd like to ask you a few questions!

1. Out of all of the fruits of the spirit, I struggle the most with \_\_\_\_\_. Have you ever had this problem? If so, can you tell me about it?

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2. What advice would you like to give me as a middle schooler so that I will become a better Christian?

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3. Sometimes I have a hard time paying attention to the sermon. Do you have any ideas to help me pay attention better?

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4. I really want to know: \_\_\_\_\_

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5. Is there anything else you would like me to know about being a Christian?

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Thank You!

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## The Easter Stories

### Lesson Plan April 12, 2009

#### Focus:

This lesson is a break from the major theme of the unit about influential women, but it does connect to other unit goals, like showing students that everything isn't black and white. By reading all four interpretations of the resurrection story, students will see that this religious holiday isn't quite like it has been taught to them.

#### Objectives:

1. Students will recall previous knowledge and apply it to a quote.
2. Students will compare and contrast multiple interpretations of the same story.

#### Materials:

- Bibles
- Pens/pencils
- Chalkboard/chalk
- Copies of Easter Bookmarks
- Construction paper
- Stick glue
- Scissors

#### Strategies:

- Whole class discussion
- Reflection
- Popcorn reading
- Comparing and contrasting
- Telephone interpretation game
- Small group collaboration

#### Procedures:

51. Write the quote of the week on the board.
52. Have students copy the quote and write a two-sentence reflection about it.
53. Choose a discussion leader and discuss the quote.
54. Recite the Easter prayer. (see Teacher Notes)
55. Ask students if they have ever heard the same story more than once with different details.
56. Play the telephone game by having one person whisper a word or phrase to the person beside her. The last person says the word or phrase aloud.
57. Repeat this game four times.
58. Talk about how the Easter story was told orally until it was written down, which is why we have four different stories.
59. Have students open their Bibles to the first story: Matthew 27:57-28:10.
60. Talk about any similarities or differences they recall from what they have traditionally been taught.

61. Continue with Mark 15:42-16:8.
62. List the similarities and differences on the board.
63. Break students up into two groups. Have one group read Luke 23:50-24:12 and the other group read John 19:38-20:18.
64. Have students report back to the group on any similarities and differences.
65. Tell students that although the details of this event differ, the main event does not.
66. Make bookmarks by gluing the template to heavy paper. Have students write the scripture from the beginning of class on their bookmark and place their bookmark in whichever version of the story they like the best.

### **Assessment:**

1. Teacher will make sure the discussion leader connects the quote to the Easter story by looking over the leader's questions before the discussion begins.
2. Teacher will have students write the similarities and differences on the board themselves. Teacher will also model the method of comparing and contrasting in Matthew and Mark and then let students do it for themselves in Luke and John.

### **Reflection:**

This lesson went really great! There were eight kids here today, and I did not know all of them and their background and familiarity with the Bible. However, everyone seemed to think that the Easter story was really cool because it was in four different places in the Bible. They all understood the significance of a story appearing four times in the Bible. They even seemed to appreciate the subtleties between each story, and they chose their favorite! The regular attendees helped the new students with finding passages and reading the stories aloud. We even ran out of time to do the bookmarks because we were so into reading the stories. I don't think these kids had ever been presented the Easter story like this before (I had not before doing research for this lesson).

Frontloading with the telephone game was a big success because it was fun and the students saw the connection between the game and the interpretation of the stories. This was very important to the lesson because it hooked the kids right from the start and made them more willing to want to read and pay attention to see how the Bible is like the game of telephone. I don't think I would change anything if I re-taught this. Of course, it depends on the next group of kids I have.

**Teacher Notes:**

Today's Quote

"He is not here; He has risen!" (Luke 24:6)

Easter Prayer

Dear God, thank You that You sent Your Son, Jesus, to die for our sins. Thank You that He arose from the dead and is now living; and because He lives, we can have eternal life. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

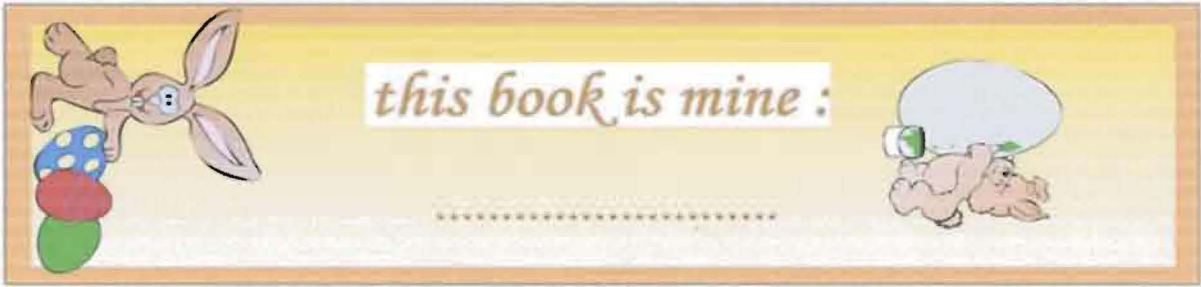
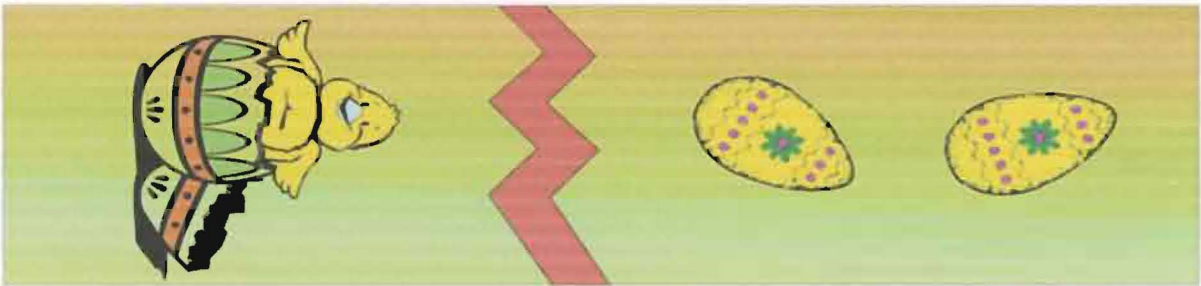
Scriptures

Matthew 27:57-28:10 (page 1332)

Mark 15:42-16:8 (page 1359)

Luke 23:50-24:12 (page 1406)

John 19:38-20:18 (page 1441)



## **Listening to the Pastor's Sermon**

### **Summary April 19, 2009**

Today no one showed up for Sunday school, but there were several students who came to the regular part of church for the sermon. I asked the Pastor to preach a sermon on the fruits of the spirit so that the middle schoolers could stay in church with the elders and listen to a sermon. The focus of his sermon was how all of the fruits of the spirit come together to make a whole person and a better Christian. The perfect Christian would possess all of these characteristics in moderation. This is an important idea and not one that we have talked about in class.

### **Reflection**

The students complain that they don't understand sermons and don't ever want to stay in the sanctuary to listen to them. I decided that maybe listening isn't their strongest skill, so I printed copies of the sermon so that the students could follow along. Even if they get lost with what the pastor is saying, they can still get back on track by finding the passage in the text. The topic is also relevant to our unit of study (fruits of the spirit), so the material will not feel disconnected and random. Listening is an important skill in the English discipline and a skill that is vital to master to be successful in life. This also helps show that the middle schoolers are mature enough to listen to a sermon respectfully.



## **Live by the Spirit**

### **Galatians 5:16 - 18**

**A new year is beginning. Have you made your new years resolution(s)? I for one make a few new years resolutions every year. I believe it is a helpful and positive exercise. Like most people, some of the resolutions I have kept and others were forgotten or abandoned months- weeks and sometimes days after making them.**

**I am reading a remarkable story of a woman, Bilquis Sheikh, a prominent Muslim woman in Pakistan in South Asia. Her story is told in the book "I dared to call Him Father". Now for us in the Christian faith this is encouraged but for the Muslim they are only to refer to God as Allah.**

**Bilquis was brought up a good Muslim and began her study of the Quran when she was four years old. After raising three children, her husband, Pakistan's Minister of Interior, announced that he was done with her and left. When asked to pray and read the Quran with the local mullah she refused saying "God has forgotten about me and I have forgotten about God".**

**About this time a young Christian girl staying in a Christian missionary's home was murdered. They stumbled across her body in one of the narrow lanes crisscrossing her village. The girl had forsaken her Muslim faith to be baptized a Christian. Her brother, infuriated by the shame this sin had brought upon his family, had obeyed the ancient law of the faithful that those who fall away from their faith must be slain. Just a year before, the Christian servant of one of the missionaries ended up in a ditch, his throat cut, and nothing had been done.**

**It was the death of this young girl and a holy visitation that would set in motion a change in her life that would shatter world she had know all of her life.**

**We read the scriptures and hear the words to live by the spirit but many Christians do not know what that really means. They spend their lives talking the pretty language of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control yet never fully live it. Oh they may experience moments of living by the spirit but it is never a central part of their lives. I want to share some of Bilquis's experiences not so much that you wont want to pick up the book and read this remarkable story for yourself but enough of the story so that together we can see the application of living by the Spirit.**

**After the death of the Christian child but before she made the commitment to accept Christ as Savior – Bilquis had a burning desire for the truth. She would sit with the Quran in one hand and the Bible in the other and read from each. And then one day she read Romans 10:8-9, “For the secret is very near you, in you own heart, in your own mouth...If you openly admit by your own mouth that Jesus Christ is the Lord, and if you believe in your own heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved”. Here the truth that was a secret is not reveled to her and all she needed to do was to take it into her heart and speak it from her mouth.**

**She said I put the book down again, shaking my head. This directly contradicted the Quran. Muslims knew the prophet Jesus was human, that he did not die on the cross but was whisked up to heaven by God and a look alike put on the cross instead. Now sojourning in a lesser heaven, this Jesus will someday return to earth to reign for forty years, marry, have children and then die. She said that she had heard that there is a special grave plot kept vacant for the man's remains in**

**Medina, the city where Muhammad is also buried. At the Resurrection Day, Jesus will rise and stand together with all men to be judge before God Almighty. But this Bible said Christ was raised from the dead. It was either blasphemy or....(the truth).**

**During this time Bilquis was seeking the truth through prayer, reading the scriptures and meditation. Her soul was open to the movement and direction of the Spirit of God. Unless we open our selves up and truly seek out His spirit we will never receive the joy of having Him move us with his spirit. She later told a Christian doctor, "I am earnestly in search of God. Whatever happens I must find God but I am confused about your faith".**

**That night she got down on her knees and prayed "O Father, my Father" and she said the room was filled by His presence. She could feel His hand laid gently on her head, love and compassion and warmth filled her. She told him "I am confused, Father, I have to get one thing straight right away". She picked up both the bible and the Quran and said which one is yours book? And he spoke to me as clearly as if I were repeating words in my inner mind. "In which book do you meet Me as your Father?"**

**The first step in living by the Spirit is to truly want and seek the truth. Jesus said to seek and you will find. Many Christians are so comfortable in their faith. They don't have the passion to know more about their faith in Christ for fear that He will show them and their lives will no longer be the same. Jesus said "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all things will be given to you as well. ". And God did just that. He spoke to her through dreams and through he written word. He opened up a world of**

**possibilities such as speaking on stage at a Billy Graham revival in Asia.**

**Here is an example- she wrote that she couldn't find enough time for the Bible. Everything I read, it seemed, was directing me to take some kind of closer walk with God. She said that she found herself at a great crossroads. So far she had met personally, the Father God. In her heart she knew that she had to give herself totally to His son Jesus or else turn my back on Him completely. To openly profess her faith would most likely cost her family and her young grandson who she had adopted.**

**She said that she cried O Lord could you really want me to leave my family? Can a God of love want me to inflict pain on others? And he answered through scriptures "anyone who puts his love for father or mother above his love for me does not deserve to be mine, and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. Matthew 10:37-38**

**The second lesson if we are to walk in the Spirit is to put Christ first.**

**Bilquis knew that the confrontation would come from her Muslim family and friends and over time they came. After attempting to dissuade her from her faith in Christ, which failed, they decided to ignore her and have nothing to do with her. But it was not until she began sharing the good new of Christ's salvation that the death threats began to appear. There was one attempt to burn her house down and soon the talk was all over town that she needed to be killed.**

**It was during this time that she met the wife of a professor named Peggy. She said that it was strange but as soon as she heard her name – her heart beat a little faster. They met over**

tea and Bliquis told her story. Peggy said that she was leaving Pakistan shortly and asked if she would come to American with her. Bilquis said it would be impossible but that she would pray about it. Later that day she asked for God's guidance and opened the bible to see if the Lord had anything special to say to me and she read Genesis 19:22 "Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither". Through a series of Godly interventions, Bliquis and her grandson were able to receive their passports, sell her properties, liquidate her holding and travel to American in an impossible short period of time. For nothing is impossible for God.

The third lesion is that if we are to live by the Spirit then we must trust and follow His lead. Bilquis did follow God's lead to American and for the rest of her life she traveled the world speaking about the new life Christ had given her.

In April, 1997 she passed away and on her tomb stone read Bilquis born 12-12-12 died 9-4-97 loving the Lord.

To live by the Spirit of God means that we become sensitive to his presence, our ears are tuned to his voice and our hearts overwhelmed with the desire to follow him no matter the cost. But we must first desire it and then seek it, receive it and finally live it. Do you believe that God desires to speak to you – to show himself to you and to make known his will for you? I believe it with all of my heart that what he did for Bilquis he will do for us.

And now the most excellent way to live is too live by the Spirit and in step with the Spirit. Is it possible to be a Christian living by the Spirit yet find ourself out of step with the Spirit? I believe most certainly. When we accept Christ as our Savior the Holy Spirit enters into our lives and dwells within us we

**become something new. Think of it like this – a car with a new engine. The Holy Spirit is the oil that makes the engine run smoothly allowing it to hit on all cylinders.**

**It becomes a smooth, quiet and a high performance machine. But over time the oil takes on impurities making the oil heavy and less lubricating. The impurities come from the world and our own sinful nature that desires what is contrary to the Spirit of God. And as we take in some impurities, if we do not seek the cleansing of our sins through confession we start see the effects of the sin on our lives and in our relationship with God. When get out of step with God, we soon find ourselves falling back losing sight of our Savior. We feel lost. We become frustrated, anxious, and angry because we are not operating smoothly or efficiently.**

**Confessions of sin flushes out the impurities and allows God to opens our hearts to receiving the fresh oil of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit that makes our hearts run pure and true.**

**What happens when we live by the Spirit? We receive the fruit of the Spirit. Here is I believe is an important distinction. Some quote that we receive the fruits of the Spirit. This makes it sound as though each characteristic, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control are separate and the possibility that each Christian may have more of one than the other or some and not all. Some could say that I have love but not patience or I have kindness but not self-control.**

**This scripture tells us that there is but one fruit and in it there is love, joy peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. And in each of these traits we are to live them to the full measure.**

**To love completely and thoroughly. Not to just those who are kind to us but to our worst enemy. To the person that has caused us the most hurt. And to love you must be able to fully forgive. Forgiveness is the greatest gift that God has given us and is the greatest gift we can give to others and ourselves.**

**To have the sense of Joy that transcends the circumstances of life. Our joy is only in the Lord for He is the only constant in our lives. We can take pleasure out the life that God has given us but if the pleasures of this world become our source joy then with every change, disappointment or turn of events our joy is diminished and will never be complete.**

**To have peace is to have the assurance that your present and your future are secure. To believe in God's promises found in Romans 8 "that all things work together for those who love him who have been called according to his purpose".**

**To have patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness and self-control are all signs that you are living in the Spirit and walking in step with God the Father.**

**And finally to be faithful in all things but more importantly to God and to never allow any emotion, thought, feeling or action separate you from the presence of God. Bilquis would tell of the times when she reverted back to her old ways or would say things that were hurtful and she would feel alone because the spirit and the presence of the Lord was not with her. She would simply ask for His forgiveness and the presence would return.**

**I recommend that we consider a New Years solution for Fountain Square. I would like to purpose that we resolve that for the year of 2009 that strive to grow as a congregation not in the number of people attending our services but for those who attend to grow spiritually in the Lord and to live by the Spirit.**

**That we will ask for the passion and desire to know Him and His ways fully. That we will earnestly seek Him and the life He has called us to live through prayer, fellowship and the reading of his scriptures. And that we will open our hearts, minds and souls to His touch and His presence in our lives. And we will know that we are walking in His presence by the fruit of our Spirit.**



## **Formative Assessment: Making a Guidebook**

### **Lesson Plan April 26, 2009**

**Focus:** This lesson covers the formative assessment, or final evaluation, of the unit, which is to make a guidebook for the fruits of the spirit that will be presented to the elementary age children the following week. Students will need to use all of the knowledge gained during this unit to make one large class booklet to present to the students.

#### **Objectives:**

7. Students will review previously learned material.
8. Students will select details from previously learned material in order to facilitate learning of elementary school students.

#### **Materials:**

- Bibles
- Paper/writing utensils
- Construction paper
- Glue/staples
- Markers
- Scissors

#### **Strategies:**

- Review
- Critical thinking skills
- Whole class collaboration

#### **Procedures:**

21. Write today's quote on the board. Give students time to copy the quote and respond in a few sentences.
22. Ask one student to be the discussion leader and discuss the quote.
23. Tell the students that they will be creating a guidebook to teach the elementary students all about the fruits of the spirit.
24. Pass out construction paper, markers, scissors, glue, and any other materials that students need to create the book.
25. Encourage discussion among members of the class on which are the most important elements to include in the book.
26. Monitor student progress during the creation of the book.
27. Have students present the book to me as a trial run through of presenting the book to the elementary students.

#### **Assessment:**

1. The teacher will lead a review with students and remind them of certain Biblical passages, especially if they seem stuck on a topic.
2. The teacher will frequently ask students about the material they select for the guidebook and whether or not elementary students can understand it.

**Reflection:**

This lesson was a challenge for the students who completed it. Originally, I had planned to host an Open House in our classroom to show the elder church members what we have been working on and show off our projects. However, attendance is a huge problem now. I talked to the grandparents of some of the students, and they will not be coming to church for most of the summer, so there really wouldn't be enough students to host the Open House. Attendance has declined because school is almost out for the summer and every regularly attending student is from a broken home and spends half of the summer with her mom and half of the summer with her dad.

So since there are only a few students that will still be around from now until the end of the summer, I had to revise my formative assessment. A guidebook was the best choice to wrap up this unit because it sums up every story and skill that has been learned and practiced during this unit and meet my unit goals. Instead of having the students interact with the elder church members during an Open House, the students will be interacting with younger church members and will get a chance to show off their leadership skills. This is really important because this class is the first opportunity that the middle schoolers have been differentiated from the elementary schoolers. Until the formation of the "No Limits on Us" class, the middle schoolers were still seen as small children. This project gives them a chance to exercise their newfound independence in a responsible way.

## **Presenting the Guidebook**

### **Summary May 3, 2009**

Today I was down with a migraine and could not go to church. The students were supposed to present their guidebook to the elementary school students today, which they knew about from our discussions the previous week. I had a “sub” in the room who did not know what to do because I did not plan on missing church and did not leave plans. However, when I returned to church the following week, I received an outstanding report of the activities that occurred. The middle school students took attendance themselves (I could tell by the juvenile handwriting in the attendance book). Then they brought in the elementary school students and taught them all about the fruits of the spirit using the guidebook. They even had words and pictures written on the chalkboard that they had used to illustrate their examples. These were not erased, so I got to see them upon returning. The sub told me that she just sat on the couch and watched the middle schoolers teach the class; she was very impressed by their level of maturity and the command of the material. The students told me a similar story about how “they taught the class” and “didn’t even need a teacher.”

### **Reflection**

I was very proud of my class when I heard about this! Their conduct on the day I missed shows how mature they are becoming and how they can be trusted as role models. I could not say this about them before the formation of the “No Limits on Us” class. When the students were given a chance to be responsible, they rose up and embraced the challenge. The students impressed the sub (an elder church member) too, which helped to improve the relationship between these two sets of people with a huge age gap. All of my unit goals were met through this project, even if it didn’t turn out exactly the way that I planned.

### **Evaluation Plan: Formal and Informal Assessment**

Some components of this project will be assessed informally through my observation.

These assignments and activities are important, but they are either based on opinions or group work. These assignments and activities are the first time new skills are being practiced, so errors are expected. All of these activities frontload information or skills for a future assessment.

- Template of girl with strengths and weaknesses
- Vocabulary or “fruit” squares
- Easter bookmarks
- Newscast
- Journaling and quote discussion
- Venn diagram

Other components will be assessed in a more formal manner. If this were a class in a public school, these components would be graded on a correct and incorrect basis. These assignments and activities are more important to the overall knowledge gained by the students and focus on achieving the unit goals and enduring understandings. These assignments would carry the same weight as a test or major project in a public school.

- Life-size posters of girl template with strengths and weaknesses: This is the second draft of strengths and weaknesses, so it will be assessed formally by having the students present a polished copy.
- Review game and *Jeopardy* review game: These games have an edge of competition, and the students are expected to know the material for this game.

- Interview of an elder church member: This is a formal assessment because it is the second chance at interviewing (with the newscast being the first).
- Guidebook: This is the formative assessment for this unit. It culminates all of the acquired knowledge learned during the first twelve weeks and asks the students to apply that knowledge in a form appropriate to the developmental levels of an elementary age student.

## Attitudes Survey

Name: Student / Pretest

Please circle the number of how you feel about these statements.

1. I know the characteristics of what a faithful Christian is.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

2. I need to have a middle school Sunday school class (No Limits on Us) instead of going to Kids for Christ (KFC).

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

3. The elder church members think I am irresponsible and immature for my age.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

4. I would like more opportunities to prove to the other church members that I am learning how to become a faithful Christian.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

5. I learn a lot from church.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

6. I wish my Sunday school classes taught me lessons that I can use as a middle schooler.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

7. If I didn't have to go to church, I would still come anyway.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

## Attitudes Survey

Name: Student 2 Pretest

Please circle the number of how you feel about these statements.

1. I know the characteristics of what a faithful Christian is.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

2. I need to have a middle school Sunday school class (No Limits on Us) instead of going to Kids for Christ (KFC).

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

3. The elder church members think I am irresponsible and immature for my age.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

4. I would like more opportunities to prove to the other church members that I am learning how to become a faithful Christian.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

5. I learn a lot from church.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

6. I wish my Sunday school classes taught me lessons that I can use as a middle schooler.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

7. If I didn't have to go to church, I would still come anyway.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

## Attitudes Survey

Name: Student 3 Pretest

Please circle the number of how you feel about these statements.

1. I know the characteristics of what a faithful Christian is.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

2. I need to have a middle school Sunday school class (No Limits on Us) instead of going to Kids for Christ (KFC).

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

3. The elder church members think I am irresponsible and immature for my age.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

4. I would like more opportunities to prove to the other church members that I am learning how to become a faithful Christian.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

5. I learn a lot from church.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

6. I wish my Sunday school classes taught me lessons that I can use as a middle schooler.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

7. If I didn't have to go to church, I would still come anyway.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree



## Attitudes Survey

Name: Student 4 Pretest

Please circle the number of how you feel about these statements.

1. I know the characteristics of what a faithful Christian is.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

2. I need to have a middle school Sunday school class (No Limits on Us) instead of going to Kids for Christ (KFC).

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

3. The elder church members think I am irresponsible and immature for my age.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

4. I would like more opportunities to prove to the other church members that I am learning how to become a faithful Christian.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

5. I learn a lot from church.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

6. I wish my Sunday school classes taught me lessons that I can use as a middle schooler.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

7. If I didn't have to go to church, I would still come anyway.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

## Attitudes Survey

Name: Student 5 Pretest

Please circle the number of how you feel about these statements.

1. I know the characteristics of what a faithful Christian is.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

2. I need to have a middle school Sunday school class (No Limits on Us) instead of going to Kids for Christ (KFC).

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

3. The elder church members think I am irresponsible and immature for my age.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

4. I would like more opportunities to prove to the other church members that I am learning how to become a faithful Christian.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

5. I learn a lot from church.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

6. I wish my Sunday school classes taught me lessons that I can use as a middle schooler.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

7. If I didn't have to go to church, I would still come anyway.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

## Attitudes Survey

Name: Student 1 Post-test

Please circle the number of how you feel about these statements.

1. I know the characteristics of what a faithful Christian is.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

2. I need to have a middle school Sunday school class (No Limits on Us) instead of going to Kids for Christ (KFC).

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

3. The elder church members think I am irresponsible and immature for my age.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

4. I would like more opportunities to prove to the other church members that I am learning how to become a faithful Christian.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

5. I learn a lot from church.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

6. I wish my Sunday school classes taught me lessons that I can use as a middle schooler.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

7. If I didn't have to go to church, I would still come anyway.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

## Attitudes Survey

Name: Student 2 Post-test

Please circle the number of how you feel about these statements.

1. I know the characteristics of what a faithful Christian is.

5	④	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

2. I need to have a middle school Sunday school class (No Limits on Us) instead of going to Kids for Christ (KFC).

⑤	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

3. The elder church members think I am irresponsible and immature for my age.

5	4	3	2	①
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

4. I would like more opportunities to prove to the other church members that I am learning how to become a faithful Christian.

5	④	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

5. I learn a lot from church.

5	4	Kinda ⑤	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

6. I wish my Sunday school classes taught me lessons that I can use as a middle schooler.

5	④	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

7. If I didn't have to go to church, I would still come anyway.

5	④	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

## Attitudes Survey

Name: Student 3 Post-test

Please circle the number of how you feel about these statements.

1. I know the characteristics of what a faithful Christian is.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

2. I need to have a middle school Sunday school class (No Limits on Us) instead of going to Kids for Christ (KFC).

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

3. The elder church members think I am irresponsible and immature for my age.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

4. I would like more opportunities to prove to the other church members that I am learning how to become a faithful Christian.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

5. I learn a lot from church.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

6. I wish my Sunday school classes taught me lessons that I can use as a middle schooler.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

7. If I didn't have to go to church, I would still come anyway.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

## Attitudes Survey

Name: Student 4 Post-test

Please circle the number of how you feel about these statements.

1. I know the characteristics of what a faithful Christian is.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

2. I need to have a middle school Sunday school class (No Limits on Us) instead of going to Kids for Christ (KFC).

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

3. The elder church members think I am irresponsible and immature for my age.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

4. I would like more opportunities to prove to the other church members that I am learning how to become a faithful Christian.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

5. I learn a lot from church.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

6. I wish my Sunday school classes taught me lessons that I can use as a middle schooler.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

7. If I didn't have to go to church, I would still come anyway.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

## Attitudes Survey

Name: Student 5 Post-test

Please circle the number of how you feel about these statements.

1. I know the characteristics of what a faithful Christian is.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

2. I need to have a middle school Sunday school class (No Limits on Us) instead of going to Kids for Christ (KFC).

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

3. The elder church members think I am irresponsible and immature for my age.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

4. I would like more opportunities to prove to the other church members that I am learning how to become a faithful Christian.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

5. I learn a lot from church.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

6. I wish my Sunday school classes taught me lessons that I can use as a middle schooler.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

7. If I didn't have to go to church, I would still come anyway.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

### **Real World Applications**

This project has real-world applications. I will use almost all of the activities from this unit in a general education setting in a public high school or middle school. I tested many lesson plan formats to develop the final one in which all of my lesson plans appear in this project. I also tested many teaching strategies that I was curious about and wanted to try. Some of the activities were awkward and not as I imagined, such as the life-size posters. I would never use life-sized posters in my classroom because my Sunday school students thought that it was very uncomfortable. They all know each other and generally feel comfortable with each other, but they did not during this project. Tracing the outlines on large paper was too personal and not enjoyable. I would not want to put middle school students through that; I do not feel like the strategy is worth the trouble.

However, some lessons and ideas were very successful and well received, such as the journaling idea where students write a few sentences about a quote and then discuss it. I was very pleased with how students began discussing important ideas after only a few weeks and eventually no longer looked to me for assistance. I could see the progression of critical thinking that took place with the students in the class. The discussion also helped the students learn which issues are important to discuss and which are not so important; the discussion helped reduce gossip.

I recently applied the journaling assignment in one of my classes at Highland High School, where I am currently student teaching. The class (an advanced placement eleventh-grade British Literature course) was not displaying the level of critical thinking skills appropriate to the course. Many students were well below grade level in problem solving and deductive reasoning skills, so I decided to introduce the daily journal as a way to judge whether or not the students



improved these skills. The journal serves as a daily practice for skills that are required in an advanced placement course as well as college. So even though I originally only used the journal with my middle school Sunday school class, I adapted it to be appropriate for an eleventh-grade public school. If I did not have experience teaching the journal in my unit with the “No Limits on Us” class, I would not have thought to use that resource when the eleventh-graders really needed it.

I started the journal in Sunday school several weeks into the unit because I saw the need for students to discuss important issues and have meaningful interactions. I realized that it is fine to change the procedures of the classroom when there is a genuine need or skill that the students are lacking. I also started the journal in the eleventh-grade class several weeks into the semester because I saw the need. If I had not successfully integrated a journaling assignment into the curriculum in Sunday school, I probably would have dismissed the journaling idea in the eleventh-grade class because I would not have had the confidence to try it. I also used the journaling assignments for different purposes in Sunday school and eleventh-grade. This journaling has become a tool that I feel comfortable using and adapting for different purposes. To me, this activity has become one of my teaching strategies rather than just another teaching theory.

In addition to gaining experience with certain strategies, I also gained invaluable experience with discipline, policies, and procedures by teaching the unit in Sunday school. Although I did not have severe discipline problems, I did have students off task, especially when the class size was larger. I am finding that this is one of the most common problems in high school as well. With class sizes of 25 students or more, it is very hard to monitor the activities of every single student. However, I’ve learned some very helpful strategies. While teaching Sunday

school, I would walk around the room and talk to all of the groups during group work. This is even more essential in the public school setting. Proximity is a very basic yet powerful tool for teachers. Just last week I had a student who was not completing his journal when I gave him time in class to do it, so I walked very slowly by his desk, and he got on task just by my presence.

### **Student Growth and Achievement**

The guidebook was exponentially helpful in proving that the students did achieve the three goals of this unit: to improve content knowledge of Biblical characters, to use information from church for personal growth, and to strengthen the relationship between elder church members and middle schoolers. The guidebook showed how much the students learned about the characters that we studied from the Bible because they looked back at their previous work where they analyzed each character according to whether or not he or she possesses the fruits of the spirit. The students used examples of the characters to define what the fruits of the spirit are in the guidebook, which turned out looking very neat and colorful. The high quality of the finished product reflects the amount of thought and effort the students put into it.

The students also used information we learned in Sunday school to grow as a person. After we analyzed their strengths and weaknesses during the first week, we kept referring back to them. The students also analyzed themselves according to whether or not they possess each of the fruits of the spirit. I noticed much better behavior as the class progressed. The students stopped gossiping as much and stopped picking fights with their brothers and sisters during church. They also sat quietly and attentively most of the time while church was in session, which is a stark contrast to their behavior before the formation of the “No Limits on Us” class when the

students were restless, loud, and distracting to other church members. I believe their behavior changed because they internalized the information from our class.

The guidebook presentation to the elementary school students also showed how the middle school students internalized the information and showed their maturity. Even without a formal teacher, the students still presented the book and explained to the younger students what the fruits of the spirit are and why they are important. The middle schoolers were presented with a chance to be leaders in the church, and they rose to the occasion.

The guidebook presentation also helped with the third goal of this unit, which was to improve the relationship between elder church members and the middle schoolers. The elder church members were impressed by the personal growth and maturity of the students in such a short period of time, including how the middle schoolers went above and beyond what was expected when they lead the class of elementary school students in a lesson on the fruits of the spirit. A few elder church members saw the presentation firsthand, and they reported back to other members of the congregation how pleased they were with the middle schoolers' behavior.

The elders were also happy to give advice to the middle schoolers during the interview, which opened communication between the two age groups. The elder church members were pleased the middle schoolers took the initiative to open those lines by approaching them with the interview. Listening to the pastor's sermon also proved that students were capable of controlling their behavior and acting appropriately during sermons. This is another sign of their improving maturity, and it did not go unnoticed by the elder church members. A few elders remarked to me how much improvement had occurred in such a short period of time. The pastor also mentioned to the entire congregation before a sermon the behavioral transformation he had seen from the middle schoolers.

### **Lessons I Learned from this Project**

This project taught me so many valuable lessons about the ideology of teaching and also about myself as a teacher. Probably my most important realization was how huge a factor a student's socioeconomic status plays in the role of education. Before teaching these students, I really did not think that socioeconomic status was a contributing factor in education. I really thought that if someone truly wants to learn, then he or she would learn. However, I now know that there are factors beyond motivation and willingness to learn that are out of the student's control and that play a huge part in determining the academic success of a student. One student wrote in her journal about worrying that her family would not have enough money for food. Because I know this student's background and family, I know that this is a genuine concern in her family that she has to battle almost daily. I cannot expect her to diligently read out of her Bible every day when she has other issues to deal with concerning her home life.

Her family also values work over education because work brings in money immediately and meets current needs. She has to overcome the negative attitudinal barrier that her family has placed on education (and much more negative towards Christian education) before she even thinks that schoolwork is worth doing. Some families do not agree with the goals set forth by a school and, therefore, do not follow school rules. Before teaching socially and economically deprived students, I did not realize that anyone would view education as a hindrance to a positive lifestyle. Now I know that education is not as widely valued as I once thought.

In addition to socioeconomic status, many factors also greatly affect attendance. Sometimes students do not come to church because they are away at one of their parents' houses as the result of joint custody from a divorce. Some parents live too far away to bring their child to church (and some do not see the importance of doing so). Although divorce and

socioeconomic status are not directly linked, I did see the correlation in this class with these students. Attendance became such a problem at the very end of this project that I actually had to change the final assessment from an Open House to a guidebook. There would not have been enough students at the Open House to make it a valuable educational experience. Attendance is a huge problem in public schools too. Students at Highland will miss an entire week of school (often for unverified reasons) and then come back in and expect to be caught up in one day. There is no substitute for attendance; make-up work cannot capture what instruction can.

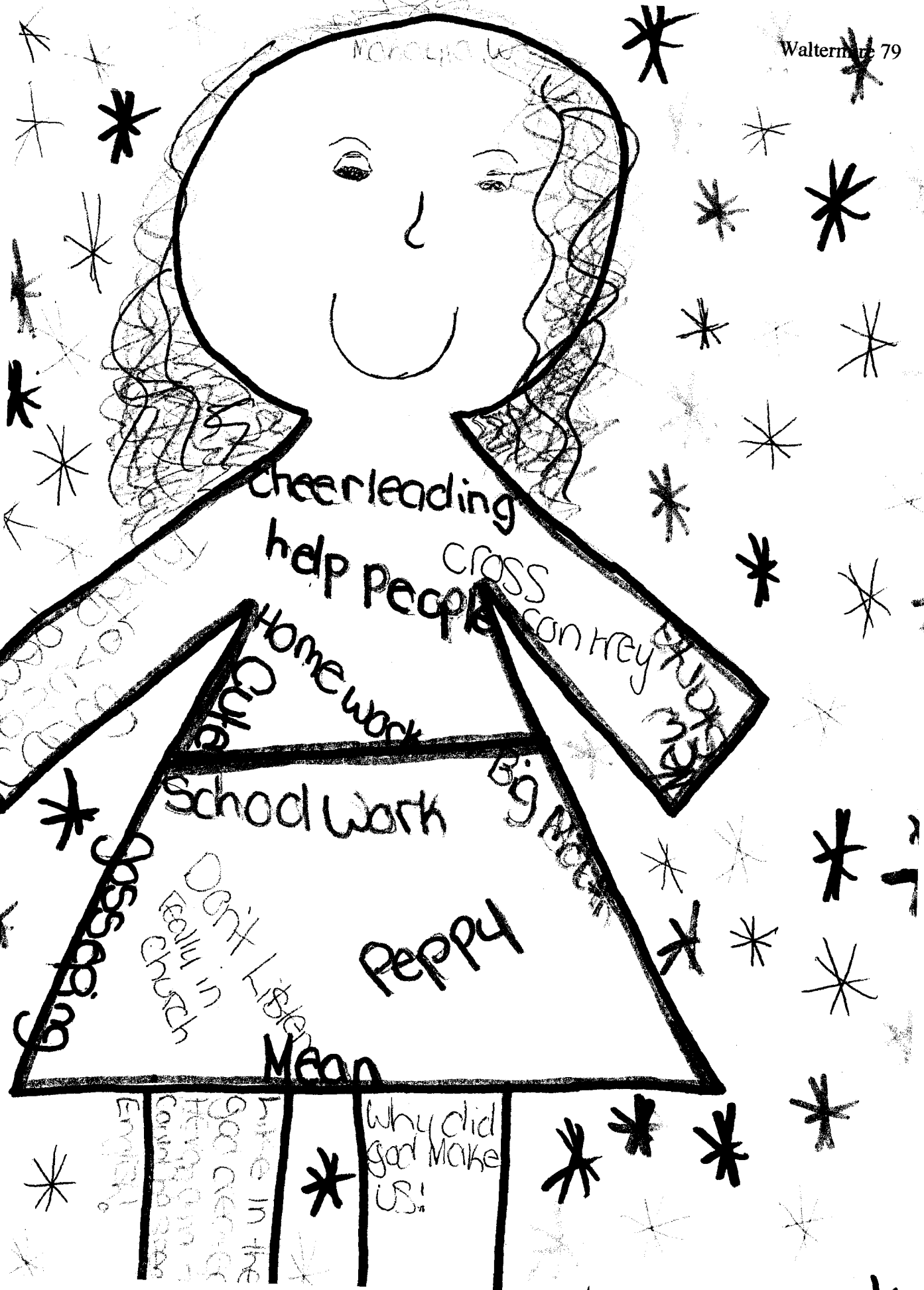
On a more encouraging note, I learned a really easy way to motivate students that works almost every time: positive reinforcement. Verbal praise is so simple to give when students deserve it. Telling a student that he or she did something well and genuinely meaning it and genuinely being happy about it raises the student's self-esteem and confidence in the class. Having a positive and excited attitude about the material being studied also lets the students know that you enjoy helping them discover knowledge. I learned that some material is very difficult but should still be taught in order to push students beyond their comfort zone. It is best to be honest when material is difficult so that students do not feel like failures when they hit a roadblock. When difficult material is assigned, it needs to be supported with a lot of supplemental instruction. During this unit, students probably struggled most with the journaling assignment. Instead of giving up on the assignment, I kept forging ahead week after week and praised the students each time they made a small milestone until eventually they were self-sufficient and the thing that once seemed impossible is actually quite feasible.

The last important lesson I learned is so simple that it almost seems silly, but in fact can have an enormous effect on how willing students are to participate and how much effort they put forth on assignments. The important lesson is that students need to know that the teacher cares

and that the job is not just a paycheck. I learned this lesson the hard way when I arrived to Sunday school right when class should have started, and my class was panicked. They thought for sure that I was not going to be there so someone went in search of a sub for the class. I learned that on time actually means late. Students need to see their teacher in the halls before school and have someone to greet them when they enter. In my student teaching experience, I arrive to class half an hour before school starts, and the students take notice. I can tell that students expect a greeting from me in the morning, and if they do not get one, they panic. Students rely on the routine and comfort of knowing someone cares and will be there. If students do not feel like the teacher cares, then the teacher has already lost the student before instruction ever begins.

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Monica W

cheerleading

help people

CROSS

can't cry

Homework

School Work

Peppy

Mean

Swinging

Don't Listen  
Really in  
Church

Why did  
god make  
US!

Life in the  
GOC Church  
Campground  
Enjoy!





march 8th

The strangest people aren't always the people who win, but the people who don't give up when they lose.

-Ashely hedgeson

- 1) This means that if you don't give up it still counts for something.
- 2) I think this is a good saying.

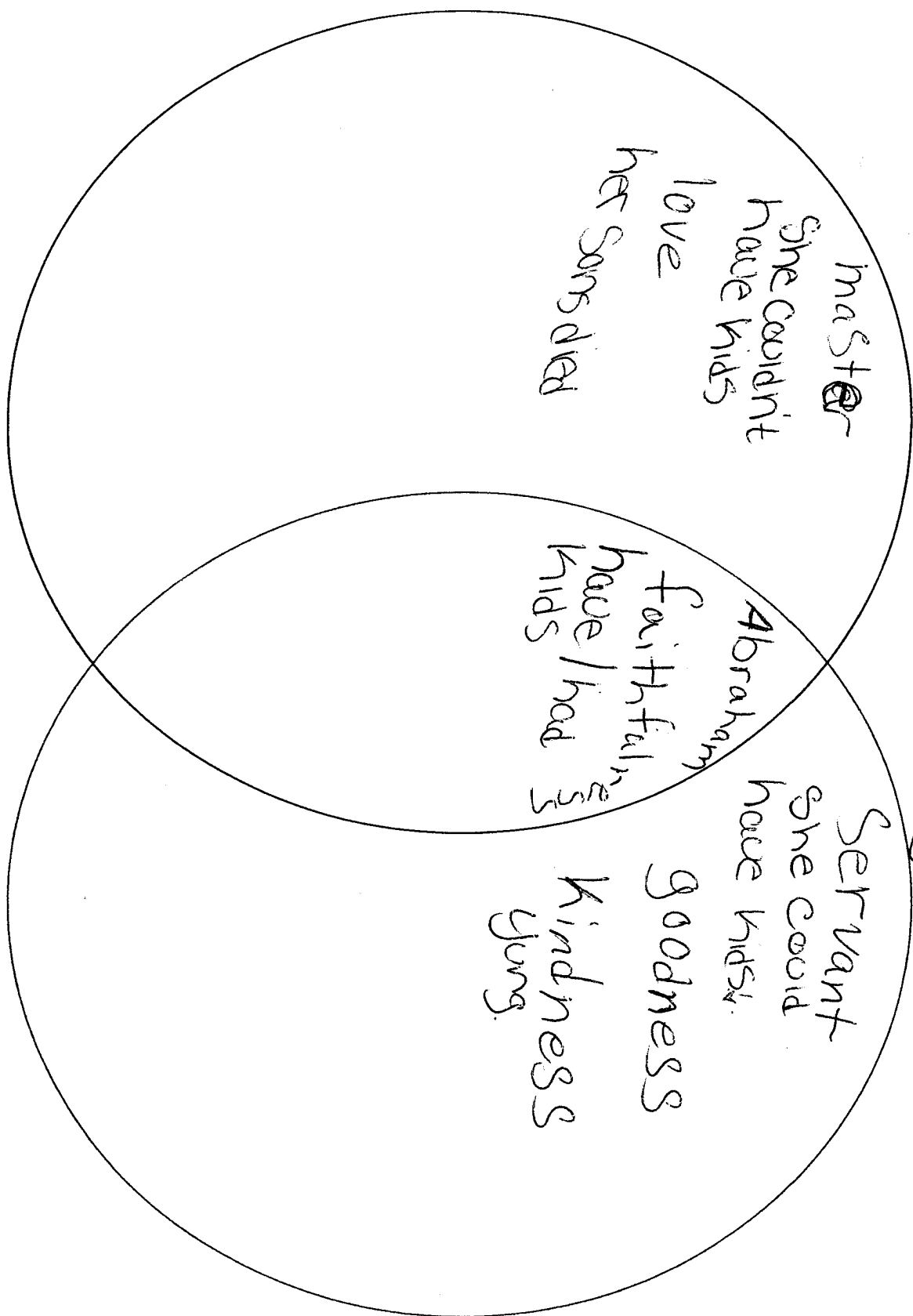
march 2nd

No one can go back and make a brand new start, but anyone can start from new and make a brand new ending.

- 1) You can't change the past.
- 2) You can change ur life starting 2day.

Sarah

Hagar



1. The first part of the report is a general description of the area.

2. The second part of the report is a detailed description of the area.

3. The third part of the report is a detailed description of the area.

4. The fourth part of the report is a detailed description of the area.

5. The fifth part of the report is a detailed description of the area.

We are coming to you live from  
Fox 59 with Breaking News

This is the real deal

Eve being the Mrs. Nowit all she  
is got herself ~~mixed~~ out of the  
garden of Eden because she didn't  
listen to the one thing God wanted  
her to so God sent two angels  
with corn and seeds to make sure  
they was not to come back

withfulness + I go to church  
entireness — not <sup>every week</sup> always as nice as I could

goodness + I don't do bad  
things.

joy + I smile all the time. 😊

kindness / I can be kind but  
not always.

love + I love my family & friends  
pets.

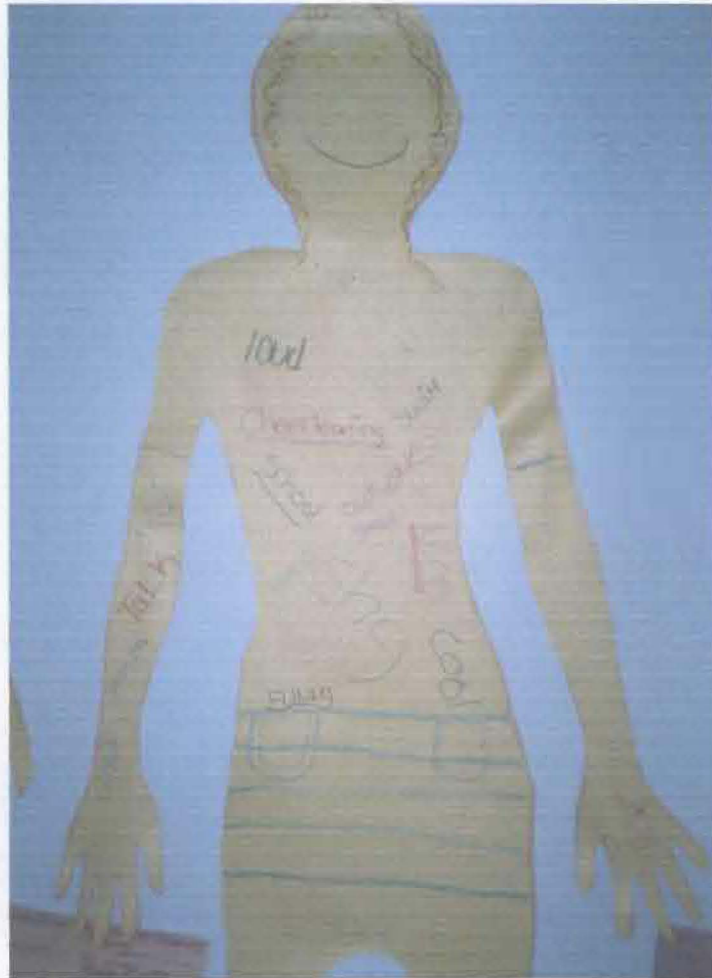
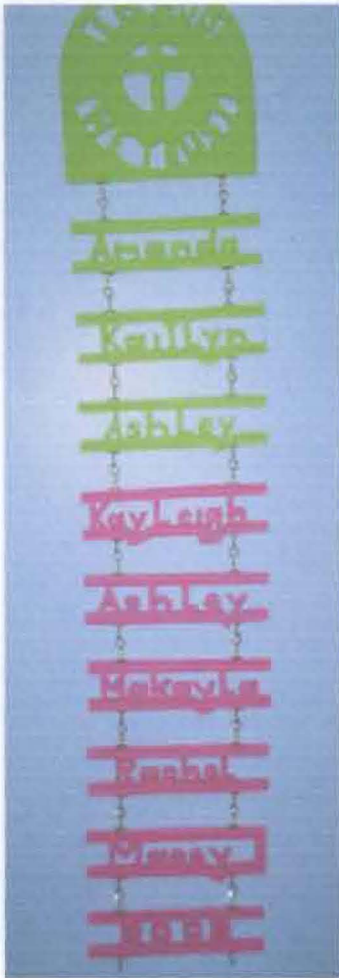
patience \ sometimes I can be

peace — I'm always worried.

self-control + I don't just do  
any thing I want.









Fruits

of

the

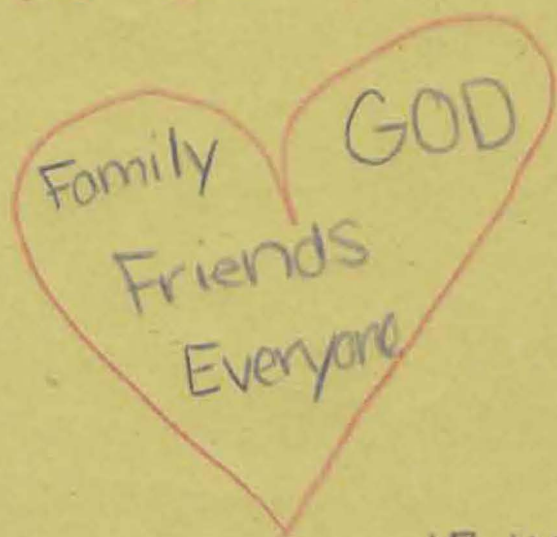
Spirit

FSUM

# Love ♥

Love is caring about others, love is also loving everyone

- Love friends, family and everyone.
- Love God!



verse: 1 Corinthians 13:4

# Faithfulness +

+ Go to church every week

+ Keep promises to Friends, Family, God, and yourself.



Verse: Hebrews 11:1

# Gentleness

+ cheer up your friend if they're having a bad day.

+ be helpful if someone doesn't understand something





Goodness ☺

+ respect the 10  
commandments

• don't steal

• don't lie

• obey elders

• don't use the lord's  
name in vain

+ make good decisions



Joy ☺

+ have a positive  
attitude

+ smile ☺



Verse: Psalm 90:14

# Kindness

+ Be nice to others +  
treat them how you  
want to be treated

+ You never know when  
a few kind words  
could make someone's  
day

+ BE NICE

Peace ☺

+ Don't worry, it's in  
God's hands

+ Don't stress yourself  
calm down + focus  
on something else





# Patience

+ Your prayers will  
be answered, wait  
it out

+ Be thankful for  
what you have

